

SIBTAINABAD THROUGH THE LENS OF TIME

A JOURNEY OF 170 YEARS
(1847-2017)



DR SANOBAR HAIDER

Preservation in India

Brick by brick

LUCKNOW

Battling to save old buildings in a city with an embarrassment of them

HIDDEN behind the fashion boutiques of Mahatma Gandhi Marg in Lucknow is an architectural gem. The mausoleum of Amjad Ali Shah, a king of Oudh, was built in the 1840s in Indo-Islamic style. Though large, it is delicate, with fine flowers in red plaster over the archways. But Mohammad Haider, a trustee of the mausoleum, mostly spies threats to the monument. He stalks the courtyard, snapping pictures of parked cars and ticking off a building labourer for dumping a large pile of rubble. "Illegal," he says. "All illegal."

India has an enormous number of beautiful old buildings and an instinct for preserving them, which it inherited partly from its colonial rulers. Unfortunately, the country also has a corrosive climate, a growing crush of people and cars in its cities and a bureaucracy that is sadly not up to the task of preservation. Its heritage is crumbling. But in Lucknow, a northern city blessed with many historic buildings, that is starting to change.

In the early 20th century India's British rulers drew up a list of monuments worth protecting, which has hardly changed over the years. Today the Architectural Survey of India (ASI) oversees some 3,600 sites, with a heavy emphasis on colonial cemeteries. The Amjad Ali Shah mausoleum made the cut, along with 60 other monuments in and around Lucknow. Many others did not. Not surprisingly, the British did not list the Rifa-e-Aam Club, an important nationalist hangout. Once glorious, it is now in an awful state. One wing has become a hospital, while squatters inhabit other rooms. The courtyard doubles as a bus

station and a rubbish dump.

Even an ASI listing is no guarantee that a building will be preserved. One of Lucknow's finest buildings, the Chhota Imambara (pictured), was recently "repaired" with modern cement, wrecking its subtle plasterwork. Mongooses scurry in and out of protected buildings; crows nest in rotting cupolas. It can be hard to find artisans who know how to handle traditional plaster and other authentic materials, says N. K. Pathak, the ASI's superintending archaeologist in Lucknow. Some conservation architects say the ASI simply isn't up to the job.

Yet there are signs of a turnaround. The national government has increased the penalties for damaging protected buildings and stiffened a 100-metre exclusion zone around monuments, where (in theory) nothing can be built. Some of Lucknow's monuments are now being sensitively repaired. There is even slight evidence to suggest that antiquity is becoming a selling point, rather than an irksome obstacle to development. Perhaps the best-preserved colonial building in Lucknow is Constantia, owned by an elite private school.

Above all, Lucknow has Mr Haider. A one-man preservation movement, he drives out encroachers, harries the ASI and files endless petitions to the courts (when not defending buildings, he works as a corporate lawyer). In the past few years he has driven four car-repair shops from the courtyard of the Amjad Ali Shah mausoleum. But the battle never stops. As your correspondent leaves the courtyard, two labourers with baskets of rubble on their heads turn to go inside.



*Royal Insignia of the kingdom of Oudh, on the ceiling
of the Central Hall of Imambada Sibtainabad.*

Picture credits - Ms. Mohsina Mirza



Dedicated to the Martyrs of Karbala & their believers

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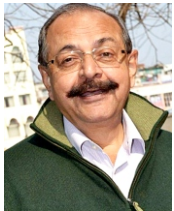
Back cover : Imambada Sibtainabad, present times.

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Vishan Prakash
Universal Booksellers
Hazratganj, Lucknow

The painstaking conservation of Imambada Sibtainabad, also known as the Mausoleum of King Amjad Ali Shah, is a very heart warming experience. It is heartening indeed to see the urban rejuvenation of the area around it which had seen mindless encroachments and 'monumental' neglect over several decades. Efforts like these are an outcome of a passionate pursuit for the cause of our cultural heritage and INTACH applauds this initiative!



Jayant Krishna
Convener, INTACH UP State



From The Mutawalli's Desk

*This is our heritage, this that our fathers bequeathed us,
Ours in our time, but in trust for the ages to be;
Wasting or husbanding, building, destroying, or shielding,
Faithful or faithless — possessors and stewards are we.*

Heritage, By Arthur Guiterman (1871-1943)

Dear Readers,

The beautiful words on Heritage by Guiterman, the famous American author adequately express the lament of the Imambada Sibtainabad which once written off in the pages of history has regained life and has had a rebirth.

It all began way back in the year 2008, when I had the privilege of being appointed as the Joint Mutawalli of the Waqf Imambada Sibtainabad, Lucknow , a responsibility which launched me into a new arena unexplored and unfathomed by me ever before.

My deep hidden love for heritage and history which seemed to have been in siesta was suddenly jolted into action as the agony of the spectacular monument lying waste to utter neglect and despair was longing for action and rescue. My struggle for the protection of this monumental gem of history has been long though not lone. Many friends, well wishers, writers, heritage lovers, seniors and of course my family members have sailed with me in my journey which started with a series of correspondence with the government and ASI officials, and the other stakeholders which was a herculean task as it involved a lot of pursuance and patience. Nevertheless, efforts did start paying off and our labour did bear fruit.

The atonement of the Monument was showing signs of deliverance and emancipation was not far away; emancipation from death ,decay and defilement. My heart goes out to each and everyone who stood by me through this turn around story .

I am grateful to Shri Syed Waseem Rizvi, the Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Board of Wakfs, for reposing trust in me, and providing me with an opportunity to serve the Imambada by assigning me the responsibility of the Joint Mutawalli and then upgrading me to the position of Mutawalli of this majestic monument. I thank Mr Kazim Husain, the President of the Committee, for always guiding, inspiring and supporting me in my efforts and of course for giving me free hand in this journey which was an uphill task. Mr Fazil, the Naib Mutawalli, who never misses a day till date to visit the Imambada and works steadily and persistently for the maintenance and upkeep of the heritage property, has been a pillar of support for me in discharging my responsibilities. The officials of the Archaeological Survey of India , which include Mr Chandra Bhal Mishra, Mr Inderjeet Singh, Mr M.A. Khan, Mr Navratna Kumar Pathak and Mr Indu Prakash, the present Superintending Archaeologist of the A.S.I. command gratitude for their support and assistance which helped in the restoration of this monument despite the not so surprising and unusual impasses. Mr Ravindra Singh, I.A.S (Retd) and the then Secretary(Culture),Government of India who is not only a die hard Lucknowite but has also been the torch bearer in this sojourn full of quagmires ,undoubtedly deserves a special acknowledgement.

Being the youngest in this committee, the responsibility vested in me was quiet humongous in magnitude but the love and affection showered on me by all elders kept me going. To quote the renowned poet Sohan Lal Dwivedi:

असफलता एक चुनौती है, इसे स्वीकार करो, क्या कमी रह गई, देखो और सुधार करो।
जब तक न सफलता हो, नींद चैन को त्यागो तुम, संघर्ष का मैदान छोड़कर मत भागो तुम।
कुछ किये बिन ही जय जयकार नहीं होती, कोशिश करने वालों की कभी हार नहीं होती।

A word of thanks to the many name less labourers, staff members, and friends who have been the invisible building blocks of this Monument reborn over a period of time. Last but not the least my heart felt gratitude to all those who directly or indirectly inspired and helped me in my odyssey which was no less than an adventure, as aptly described by John Milton, "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Many a times the follies made by my humble self were overlooked and encouragement kept coming in from all corners which helped the Monument reach its shape which now boasts of some most beautiful murals and resplendent interiors. The credit for this also goes to Mr Ansar-ud-din, the artist who, alongwith the officers of the ASI devised the a roadmap for the artistic restoration of Imambada Sibtainabad and then was assigned the work of restoration of the Constantia, for which he made the country proud by securing the French Government's Honour for his contribution towards the conservation of Constantia.

The story of this magnificent Monument has not been less than a rendezvous with destiny and is an inspiration enough for heritage lovers to work for the conservation of our rich cultural legacy. This journey which began alone received the support and succor of many and hence stands exalted in the face of adversities.

I would be failing in my duties if I do not make a mention of the help, guidance and support of Mr Manav Prakash of the Universal Booksellers for helping and motivating me, and connecting me to the right set of people, and also for prompting me for documenting all the efforts made by us for this monument and for replicating this success story for the other monuments of Lucknow. His passion, coupled with the much needed guidance of his father Vishan Prakash and uncle Chander Prakash, the most lovable elders, has been a morale booster for me.

A word of acknowledgment for my dear friend Gaurav Sarin, Advocate Supreme Court, who motivated and guided me on the legal aspects for the rescue of this monument.

I would also thank Dr Sanobar Haider, the author, my better half, for working selflessly for this dream souvenir. Her research on Imambada Sibtainabad, tracing its history and recording the restoration shall certainly prove to be an important historical record and reference material about the Imambada. Dr Haider collated the historical records after visiting the Libraries, Archives and Government Offices, meeting the Clerics, the Historians and almost all the relevant stakeholders. Her consistent efforts are laudable and inspiring. A special word of gratitude goes out to my Mother, our Sons and all family members for their undetted support and affection.

The illustrations, documents and photographs placed in the souvenir have been collected by us through all these years, after consistent efforts through various resources, including the libraries, government records using the RTI, and personal collections of many equally passionate heritage lovers. In this noble cause, we have been very fortunate, for having the support, not only of the academicians who guided us on the history of the monument, but also of our respected clerics, who have been a source of strength to my efforts. The recent photographs of the Imambada, captured through the Drone Camera have been gratuitously done by Ms. Mohsina Mirza, the multi faceted academician and an avid drone photographer at La Martiniere College, Lucknow.

This souvenir is an attempt to sensitize all those who are interested in reviving our cultural identity and to kindle a flame in every heart for the protection, preservation and sustenance of our rich cultural legacy.



(Syed Mohammad Haider Rizvi)

LL.M., MBA (Gold Medalist)

Corporate Lawyer and

Mutawalli, Committee of Management,

Wakf Imambada Sibtainabad Mubarak,

Hazratganj, Lucknow



The tinted glass door of the Imambada



Silver rupee coin of Amjad Ali Shah, bearing the Ruler's name and title.

Preface

'Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness.'

Frank Gehry

Indian history is full of the episodes of the rise and fall of dynasties and kingdoms. Another aspect similar to this phenomenon is related to the rise and fall of monuments, buildings and palaces. With their elaborate superfluities and wonderful architecture, these monuments represent one of the most outstanding facets of the multifaceted Indian culture. An architectural feat in itself, each Indian monument is remarkably a splendid sample of unbelievable artistry, covering a sense of mystery, deception and romance. Every historical masterpiece is an evidence of the master craftsmanship and elegance that brings to the forefront the splendor of the bygone era.

The Monuments of Lucknow similarly withhold within their wraps and folds the surreptitious stories of the past. These vintage edifices represent our history and glorify our past. However, these majestic reminders of our heritage have many a times been subjected to negligence and disregard which has proven disastrous for their existence over a period of time. One such monument attributed to the grandeur of the nawabs of Oudh is the Imambara Sibtainabad located in the Hazratganj market area in the heart of the city of Lucknow. This Monument apparently has seen more apathy and a near death experience than any other monument in Lucknow. The construction of Sibtainabad Imambara was started in 1847 by the then Nawab of Awadh, Amjad Ali Shah. His mausoleum is situated inside the complex. It was later completed by Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. The Imambara was briefly used as a church during the British rule. Declared a heritage monument in 1919, it went into the hands of Lucknow Improvement Trust (later LDA) in 1921, which allotted various residential portions to the Anglo Indians, whose families still reside in its sprawling campus. This monument is not only a live Imamabara today, but is also an important tourist destination and has had a tryst with destiny before finally being restored and given a new lease of life.

This work is an attempt towards tracing the chronicles of this majestic edifice and the story of its resurrection. An endeavour to uprise the people at large about this unsung and unwept legacy which deserves a prominent place in the history of the art and architecture of Awadh.

With a heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty and a warm thanks to our Parents, Sons, Family and Friends for their continued support and cooperation.

Enjoy Reading !!

Dr. Sanobar Haider

Ph.D. (History)

Assistant Professor, M.B.P. Govt. P.G. College,

Aashiyana, Lucknow



*An old 'Alam'
in the Imambada Sibtainabad*

Imambada Sibtainabad, Lucknow, through the Lens of Time

If Lucknow was the Baghdad and Cordova of India, and Nishapur and Bokhara of the east, the heart of this enthralling magnificent city undoubtedly lies beating in Hazratganj.'

Abdul Halim Sharar

This research work is an effort towards drawing the attention of us all towards the apathy shown not only to the Sibtainabad Imambada but also to many such monuments and edifices of history which need to be protected for preserving the history of India. The story of Imambada Sibtainabad's rebirth needs to be replicated for the preservation and conservation of many such monuments, which are desperately looking for a messiah to heal them and to save them from falling into obscurity.

THE KINGDOM OF OUDH- A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

The story of Oudh and Lucknow goes back to the year 1580 A.D, when Jalal-ud-din Mohammad Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor established the administrative province or the Subah of Oudh. Wakil-i-Mutlaq, Burhan-ul-Mulk, Itmad ud-Daula, Nawab Sa'adat Khan Bahadur, Shaukat Jung (1680-1739), the progenitor of the dynasty of the Nawabs, was appointed as the Nawab Wazir in 1722. He established the capital of the province of Oudh at Faizabad.

Asaf-ud-daulah shifted the capital of Oudh from Faizabad to Lucknow in 1775, and that was the time when Lucknow gained the status of a Capital city. This fabled city of Lucknow has to its credit its own legendary history and several historical monuments and sites that attract the people from various regions of the world. "The magnificent edifices standing proudly among the architectural skyline of the city are living examples of the Nawabs architectural ingenuity"¹.

The ransacking of Delhi by the Iranian ruler Nadir Shah, invasion of Sikhs, Marathas and Rohillas, and the occupation of Delhi in 1803 by the British troops led to the decline of the Mughal power and the Mughal emperors lost their paramountcy. The provincial governors, therefore, became stronger and Oudh also gained strength and became more independent. This led to the immigration of the local artists and cultural luminaries from the Mughal court, who found patronage in the newly founded blossoming court of Oudh. The hegemony of the East India Company also grew, and the rulers of Oudh reeled under pressure, forced by circumstances to withdraw from administration and draw their attention towards the development of arts and culture which went a long way in developing Oudh as a symbol of courtly etiquettes, mannerisms and remarkable culture.



A group Portrait of a of a long line of the Nawabs and Kings of Oudh.

Architecture constituted a major part of the resources and energies of the nawabs and kings of Oudh, who adorned the capital with magnificent buildings standing tall through the trials of times. In a course of 100 years the city of Lucknow was studded with scores of Palaces, Monumental Gateways, Mosques, Imambadas, Karbalas and



Nawab Sadat Khan Burhan ul Mulk



Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah, by John Zoffany



King Wajid Ali Shah in his later years

other splendid monuments big and small. Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah (1775 -1797) and Nawab Saadat Ali Khan (1798-1814) were great builders, as compared to their predecessors, who gave special impetus to religious buildings and, in a hundred years, there emerged around a hundred monuments in the city of Lucknow. It was however, during the rule of Asaf-ud-Daulah that the artistic glory of Lucknow and Oudh developed and flourished. He strove to surpass his contemporaries and therefore spent lavish sums on the luxuries of royalty and built imposing palatial and religious architecture to proclaim the magnificence of his dynasty.

Grand palaces, mosques and mausoleums were erected, which in turn paved the way for the aesthetic and stylistic identity of the kingdom of Oudh inspired by the architectural marvels of the great Mughals with a European flavour. Some of the most famous buildings attributed to this generous Nawab are the Bara Imambada (Constructed between 1785-1791), the Rumi Gate (Constructed in 1784), said to have been modelled in 1784 after the sublime porte (Bab-i-Humayun) in Istanbul and the Bibiyapur Kothi, "built on the direction of General Claude Martin for Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah who stayed there from time to time, using it as a hunting box"²

More famously described in the poetic rhythm "Jisko na de Maula, us ko de Asaf-ud-Daulah", he was the Nawab who commissioned the construction and re construction of the Bara Imambada which is a well known legend of generosity in the pages of the history of Oudh.

The process of europeanisation began during the reign of Asaf-ud-Daulah who is said to have requested the British Resident, John Bristow, "to produce for him the plan of a house after European taste"³ The French adventurer, Major General Claude Martin played an important role in designing the blue print. European elements increasingly infiltrated in to the architecture of Oudh, and a distinct style began to emerge which had the bearings of regional and European traditions. While Saadat Ali Khan employed Captain Mc'Leod, Ghazi-ud-din Haider was assisted by William Tricket.

Almost all the buildings of Saadat Ali Khan were European in fashion, Ghazi-ud-din Haider preferred a mixed style while Wajid Ali Shah used both. Thus, it would not be wrong to say that there occurred a process of hybridisation of architecture. The Khursheed Manzil, the Chattar Manzil, the Chota Chattar Manzil, Moti Mahal and Chaumukhi Kothi were all built in this new style.

The next ruler who contributed towards the architectural development of Oudh was King Ghazi-ud-Din Haider (1814-1827), who authorised the construction of some monuments like the Chhota Chattar Manzil, parts of Moti Mahal Complex and the Shah Najaf Imambada. Nasiruddin Haider completed the Chattar Manzil complex and constructed Kothi Darshan Bilas.



View of the Great Imambara and Rumi Darwaza from Musabagh end of the city by Dodgson, 1860

Thereafter, it was Wajid Ali Shah, the much celebrated King who commissioned a number of architectural projects like the Sikandarbagh Palace and the Qaiserbagh Palace Compound and the Mausoleum of his father, King Amjad Ali Shah, whose construction initiated by the emperor himself and completed by Wajid Ali Shah. By the time the dynasty ended, the local builders and masons had become well versed in the art especially due to the exposure to the buildings of Claude Martin. These monuments do provide a "peep" into the blanket of the past."

Lucknow was once dotted with palaces and mausoleums, the remnants of many of which still linger, as aptly described in the lines 'Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang'¹⁴, all remind us of the Nawabi times. The old monuments stand as an edifice of the munificence of Asaf-ud-Daulah and the love, romance and pageantry of the famous Wajid Ali Shah. Nawabs were great builders and built many magnificent monuments which bear testimony to their love for architecture. William Howard Russell, an Irish reporter with "The Times", considered to have been one of the first modern war correspondents, who visited the city in 1857 stated that 'I confess, I felt inclined to rub my eyes again and again not Rome nor Athens nor Constantinople, not any city in India appears to me as striking as this and the more I gaze the more its beauty grows up on me.' The 19th century writer Tota Ram Shiyan talked of the numerous Royal edifices in the north of Lucknow, most of which were destroyed in 1857.

Sibtainabad Imambara has an important place in the history of Urdu literature. Two master poets of marsiya style of poetry Meer Babar Ali "Anees" and Mirza Salamat Ali "Dabeer" on the insistence of last ruler of Awadh Nawab Wajid Ali Shah had ignored their rivalry and for the first time recited their work in the presence of each other at this Imambara.

It feels good to know that this majestic Imambara, which was in ruins and under heavy encroachments has now been granted a new lease of life, through the efforts of heritage lovers. Such efforts should not only be lauded, but also appreciate and replicated.



Ravi Bhatt
Historian and Author

THE “HAZRAT” OF GUNJ, AMJAD ALI SHAH, THE FOURTH KING OF OUDH (1842-1847)

Abu'l Zafar, Muslih ud-din, Sultan-i-Adil Khaqan-i-Zaman Muhammad Amjad Ali Shah, Sipahr Shukoh Bahadur was the second son of his predecessor Muhammad Ali Shah. Young Amjad Ali Shah was provided with the best of religious education under the guidance of Maulvi Imdad Husain Khan, from whom he learnt the Islamic values of faith and piety.

After the sudden death of his elder brother Nasir-ud-Daula Nawab Mirza Asghar Ali Bahadur, Amjad Ali Shah was made 'Wali Ahad' On 15th October 1837, corresponding to 4th Jamadi-us-Sani, 1253Hijri, and given the epithet of “Suraiya Jah”.

Owing to his mannerisms and piety, Muhammad Ali Shah appointed him as the Vazir of Oudh on 24th July 1840, with Ibrahim Khan Sharf-ud-Daulah as his Naib Wazir, to train him in the affairs of administration. He ascended the throne on 7th May 1842 at the Qasr-us-Sultan, Lal Baradari, Lucknow.

Amjad Ali Shah erected the Iron Bridge over river Gomti, which had been lying by the wayside for more than thirty years, and also constructed the metalled road to Kapur which still follows the same route. His minister Amin-ud-Daulah built the great Aminabad Bazar and Serai on the Kanpur Road now a part of central Lucknow. Contrary to the popular belief of Hazratganj



Amjad Ali Shah



Accession of Amjad Ali Shah, 1842

having been named after Begum Hazrat Mahal, it is Amjad Ali Shah (Hazrat) in whose name Hazratganj has been named. The term Hazrat is equivalent to Saint, and the saintly qualities won Amjad Ali Shah, the epithet of Hazrat.

Von Orlich visited Lucknow soon after Amjad Ali Shah's accession and was granted audience by the King in the Farhat Bakhsh. General Nott was the new Resident and was assisted by Captain Shakespeare who had been one of the actors in the tumultuous scene at Muhammad Ali Shah's accession. The Resident presented Von Orlich to the King, who impressed the visitor as being tall, rather fat, benevolent-looking, having an enormous nose. On this occasion he wore a robe of green silk lavishly embroidered with gold and silver threads, which opened to disclose red silk pantaloons and gold embroidered shoes. Upon his head he wore a high jewelled cap. Round his neck and upon his fingers flashed priceless jewels.⁵ Amjad Ali Shah is always depicted as wearing the most gorgeous robes and jewels. Not one costly chain but four

hung round his neck, a magnificent osprey surmounted his crown, which blazed with jewels. In the royal palace, a special table was reserved for a large assortment of head-dresses for it pleased the King to change these at frequent intervals.

At the end of an interview the chamberlain produced the golden embroidered garlands for which Lucknow is still justly famed. The royal ones were made of silver thread and incorporated the kingly arms of two swords, a tiara, a crown, and the famous fish emblem embossed in gold upon silver shields. These garlands the King with his own hand placed around the necks of his visitors before escorting them to the entrance of the palace. There he was wont to embrace them, shake them warmly by the hand and retire. King Amjad Ali Shah cared nothing for manly sports. Instead, he passed a great deal of his time in his harem where dwelt a very remarkable woman, his chief wife, Janab-i-Alia Malika-i-Kishwar Bahadur, Mukhtar-i-Alia, Fakhr-uz-Zamani Nawab Taj Ara Begum Sahiba daughter of Hasin-ud-Din Khan of Kalpi.

In 1845, Henry Lawrence paid a tribute to these kings in an article in the Calcutta Review . He said: “The Oudh rulershave seldom been cruel, and have never been false. In the storms of the last half century, Oudh is the one single native state that has invariably been true to the British Government: that has neither intrigued against us nor seemed to desire our injury.” The verdict of so stern a moralist should be remembered by those who are inclined to think of all the Kings of Oudh alike as monsters of treachery and misrule.

Hazratganj Maqbara, the place known to us since my childhood, was a mere structure unworthy to be noticed and encroached by people for their vested interests.

It was not at all left in any condition to be considered for any historical or religious significance.

And then our dear Haider Bhai, a genuinely sincere heritage crusader & a Lucknowite to the core, decided to fight the legal battle with the concerned administrative authorities, to restore the lost glory of this monument. With all his hard work & efforts, today we have the same legacy & aura of that beautiful Imambara Sibtainabad, which has regained not only its religious importance but also got itself rightfully placed amongst the significant tourist attractions of Lucknow city.

I have witnessed the gradual transformation of this place over the past few years, wherein the dustful structure falling off brick by brick, was so delicately restored back in its old & beautiful form, eventually making it as a delightful experience to visit this monument.



Shadab Raza
Banker, Dubai, United Arab Emirates



Within the larger precinct of Hazratganj, full of glitzy arcades of commerce, lofty structures of institutional grandeur and contemporary edifices in glass, lies the relatively neglected and often sidelined Imambara complex that in the late nineteenth century found mention amongst the other two more well-known ones in Husainabad. The impressive structure, comprising a mausoleum with a forecourt set within a larger court, is off the tourist trail in Lucknow.

Despite significant recent restoration campaigns by the ASI and the Shia Waqf Board, the Sibtainabad Imambara site has sadly struggled with issues of rampant encroachment both within the inner and outer complex walls. The gateways are heavily encroached as well. The encroachments in the inner wall comprise residences allotted by the LDA decades ago, while traces of the outer wall have all but disappeared among the commercial development over time. The city agencies, LDA, Shia Waqf Board, and ASI need to work together to develop guidelines on how to manage all the existing construction, and ensure that further loss of the historic built environment is halted and checked within the iconic mausoleum complex.

Ashima Krishna, PhD
Assistant Professor, Historic Preservation
School of Architecture and Planning
University at Buffalo, The State University of New York

THE KING, THE HERITAGE AND THE LEGACY: IMAMBADA SIBTAINABAD

The mention of the Imambadas, of the erstwhile Kingdom of Oudh is not complete without the discussion about Sibtainabad, the lofty Imambada built by King Amjad Ali Shah, as his final resting place and for the observance of the mournings of Muharram, in Lucknow, the capital of Nawabi Oudh.

“This imambada is a bad imitation of Husainabad Imambada, but if it were illuminated like Husainabad at the time of Muharram, then the eastern part of Lucknow would also become a blaze of light. Although it has no vasiqa, its income is not inconsiderable. Many of the shops outside the enclosing walls of the building are those of prosperous trades-men and inside the enclosure, many of the houses are occupied by eurasians and others from whom large rent are collected. A benevolent act on the part of the rent collector is that at the time of Muharram, they light some lamps on the grave itself and in the Imambada.”⁶

It is a matter of concern that though a lot has been written and discussed about the various monuments of the city of the Nawabs including the Bara Imambara, Husainabad Imambada, Rumi Gate, Residency etc, one monument which has not received its due share is the Mausoleum of King Amjad Ali Shah, the fourth King of Oudh, named Imambada Sibtainabad by his son Wajid Ali Shah, is situated in the far more famous market place of Hazratganj.

The monument, also known as “Jannat Makan ka Imambada” situated on the eastern side of Hazratganj, was described as the property of King Amjad Ali Shah. This place came to be known as Hazratganj after the name of Amjad Ali Shah, the term 'Hazrat' being equivalent to Saint, attributed to Amjad Ali Shah for his saintly qualities. Standing tall in Hazratganj the upmarket place of Lucknow, the Sibtainabad Imambada looks majestic. But a few years back, it was a different story. It showcased a dilapidated monument whose beauty had been eclipsed by encroachers.

This glorious monument which has withstood the passage of time, despite being a centrally protected Monument has had a history of administrative neglect and apathy and has stood witness to the sorry state of affairs of the historical monuments of the city.

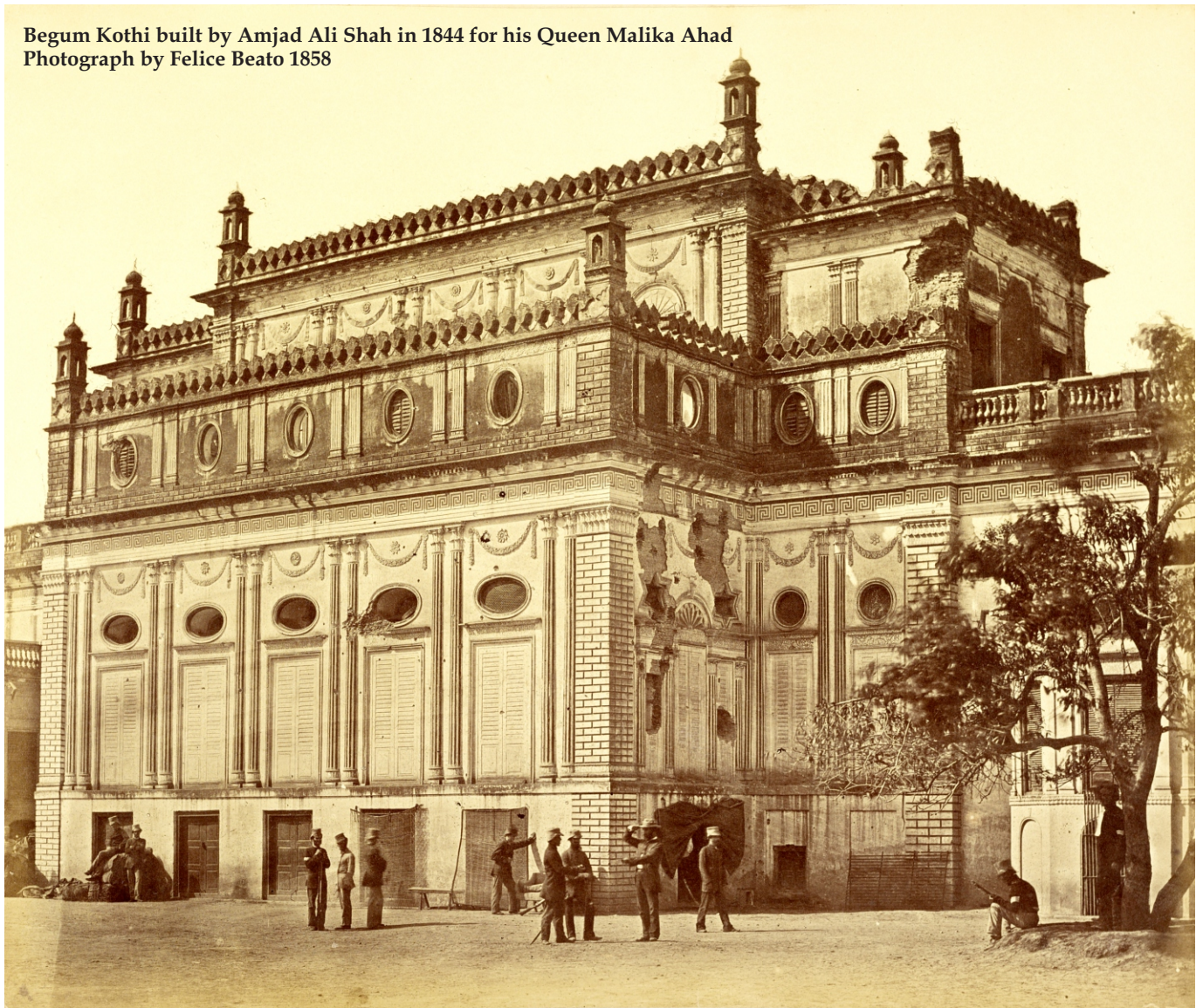


King Amjad Ali Shah with his sons (L-R)
Dara Sitwat, Mustafa Ali Khan, Amjad Ali Shah (seated)
Wajid Ali Shah & Sikander Hashmat

Imambada Sibtainabad, (signifying the names of Hasan and Husain, the grandsons of the Holy Prophet PBUH) however is now a fully restored and renovated “Live Monument”, thanks to the efforts of Mohammad Haider, the Mutawalli and his team of the Committee of Management of Wakf Imambada Sibtainabad Mubarak, rightly quoted to be a “One Man Preservation Movement” by the Economist, London.⁷

This building, situated opposite the then Delhi and London Bank, is the Mausoleum of the fourth king

Begum Kothi built by Amjad Ali Shah in 1844 for his Queen Malika Ahad
Photograph by Felice Beato 1858



of Oudh, and is commonly known by the name of Imambada Sibtainabad while the older generation of Lucknowites calls it the Chota Imambada, owing to its unique resemblance with the Asafi or the Bada Imambada. The building was originally furnished with costly fittings, all of which were plundered during the mutiny. On the whole the building has no architectural pretensions, and, after the storming of the Begum Kothie, this was the next place taken by Colin Campbell, on the 14th March 1858, after a severe struggle⁸.

The construction of this lofty Imambada was commenced by King Amjad Ali Shah of Oudh himself, during his lifetime, and completed by his son Wajid Ali Shah when he ascended the throne in 1847. He spent Rs. Ten Lakhs on its construction.⁹ The place where this grand edifice was built was earlier the Chhavni (cantonment) of Mendu Khan Risaldar (the eldest Son of Mirza Khurram Bahkt, a prince of Delhi, a cavalry commander during the reign of Ghaziuddin Haider with 2000 sawars under him) who also had a serai (inn) in its vicinity. A description from the 1850's mentions the Sibtainabad Imambada to be in the centre of the gated area.¹⁰ The main architecture of this Imambada was copied from the Asafi Imambada (Bara Imambada) by the architect Husain Ali Khan. The structure was surrounded on all four sides by two enclosures with gateways at the middle of the Ghulam Gardish which are arched cloisters meant for attendants. The main building is placed on an eight feet high platform overlooking open land and a tank of water for ablutions. There are two big halls in the centre of the building, with square rooms on the

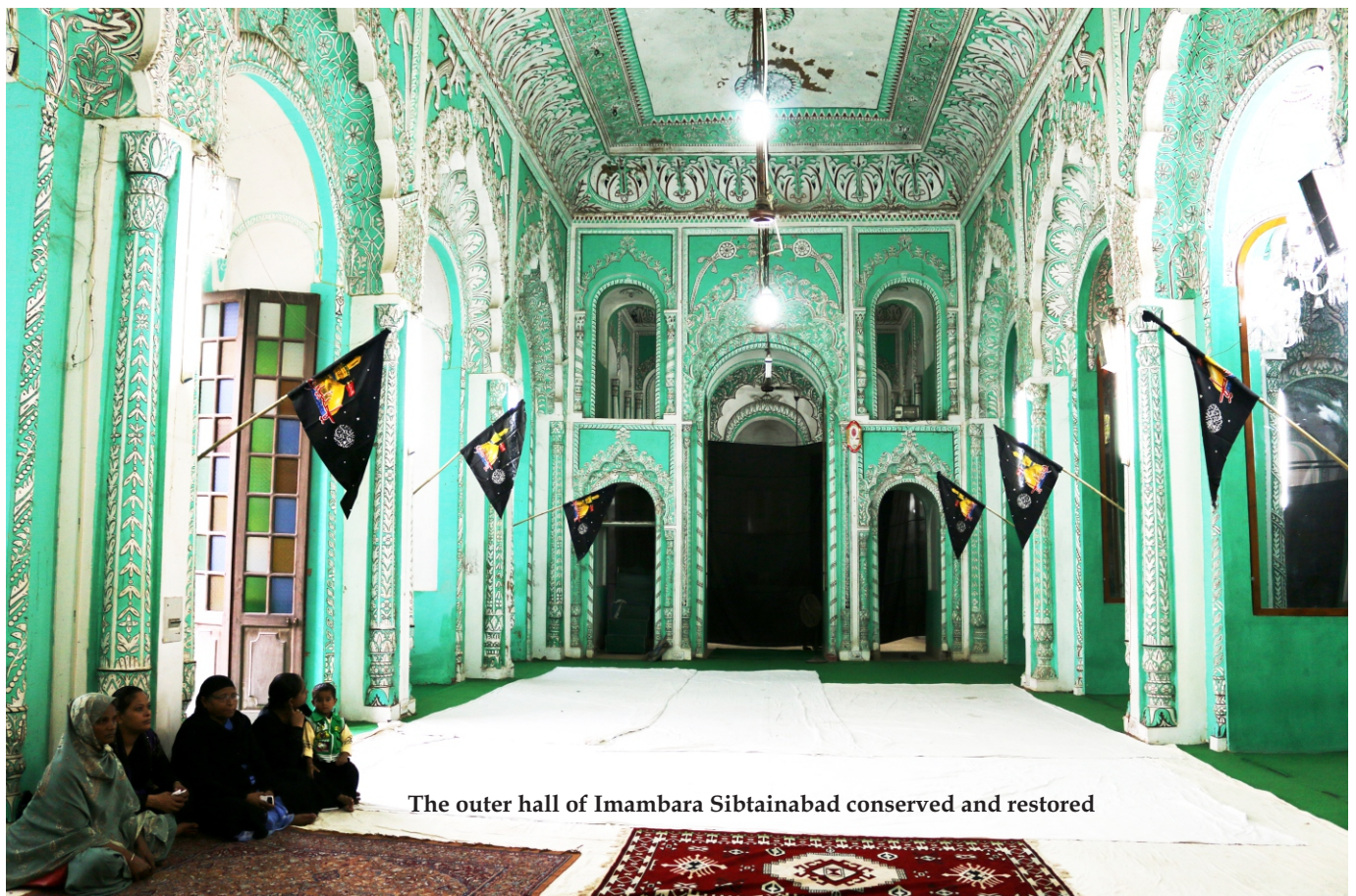
right and left wings and then the main building on a raised platform where zarih is placed during the period of Moharram. Beneath a trap door, in the center of the floor, a few steps lead to a vault where the King's body lies, forlorn and forsaken. The sarcophagus is fused with the floor of the main hall.

The Imambada, which was spread over an area of more than 16 Bighas, had two Mahalserai at the two corners of the mausoleum, Hammam on the east and the kitchen on the west. The Imambada structure was later referred to as maqbara, for bearing the mortal remains of King Amjad Ali Shah. It is also believed to be housing the grave of one of his grandsons Mirza Javed Ali and the grave of Najmun Nissan Begum, a queen of Wajid Ali Shah who was formally addressed as Ashiq Mahal.



Gateway of the Small Imambara (Imambara Sibtainabad) Felice Beato, 1858

In his brilliant work "Architecture of Lucknow and its dependencies, 1722-1856", Dr Banmali Tandan, speaking of the magnificence of this Imambada remarks- "The imambara's facades reveal a constancy to the standard imambara design. The east - or the entrance-front is defined by five large round-headed arches



The outer hall of Imambara Sibtainabad conserved and restored

with superimposed foliated ones. To their flanks are sets of six smaller arches each, in superimposed levels. This arcade is surmounted by spacious eaves supported on brackets; and the roofline is articulated by a perforated arcade of an outline recalling that used in Saadat Ali Khan's Tomb . The materials used in the imambara are bricks of the usual small Nawabi type and stucco; the interior is sumptuously decorated, with permissible Islamic decorative motifs being executed in a variety of hues. The Imambara has served as a tomb of Amjad Ali Shah, which again, demonstrates that imambaras could be used both for ritual and for the burial of important personages."

King Wajid Ali Shah made sure that his father's tomb was completed and duly and faithfully maintained. After ascending the throne he deposited Rs.7 lakhs in the British Residency's treasury as a perpetual loan for the expenses of his father's mausoleum in Hazratganj, so that his late Majesty's soul may always derive the benefit of this permanent charity. Expenses included the employment of a daroga(suprintendent), 11 men to read the Quran, watchmen, sweepers, gardeners, masons and carpenters, chowkidars, muezzins, bhishtis, musicians, sepoy and many more¹²

According to local traditions, it is believed that nearly, 170 men were to be employed at an annual cost of Rs.16000/- for the upkeep of the Imambada. Along with this there was a sum of Rs. 5000/- earmarked for Moharram every year, the same amount to mark the death anniversary of the late King and Rs. 500/- to be spent during the month of Ramazan. Wajid Ali Shah was deeply devoted to his 'revered' father having made much of genuine efforts to ensure a proper upkeep of his mausoleum, which makes the long term neglect of the Sibtainabad Imambada all the more sad and disrespectful particularly when it was being used as a Government Office and a carpentry workshop for many decades. The single storey apartments around the Imambada which was later allocated to Anglo Indian families, was originally intended to house the pilgrims and devotees coming to pray at Amjad Ali Shah's tomb and attend to the mournings of muharram.



Qirat (recitation of the verses) from the Holy Quran by Qari Masoom from the Mimbber of Imambada Sibtainabad



Nauhakhwani by Anjuman-e-Raunaq-e-Deen-e-Islam at Imambara Sibtainabad

DATELINE 1857: FLAMES AND FIRE

Way back in the year 1856, the province of Oudh had been annexed by the British East India Company and Wajid Ali Shah was exiled to Calcutta the year before the rebellion broke out. This high-handed action by the East India Company was greatly resented within the state and elsewhere in India and worldwide. The first British Commissioner (in effect the governor) appointed to the newly acquired territory was Coverley Jackson. He behaved tactlessly, and Sir Henry Lawrence, a very experienced administrator, took up the appointment only six weeks before the rebellion broke out.

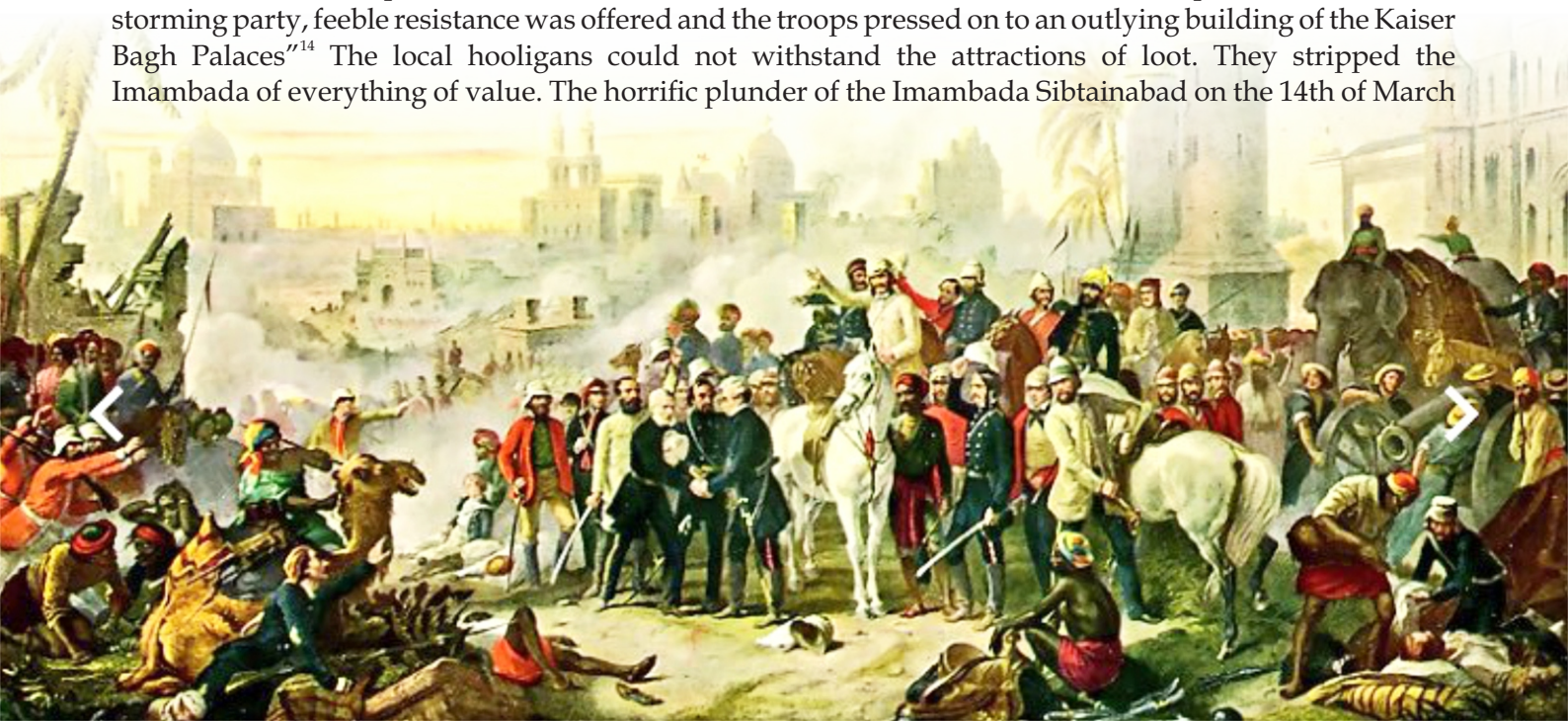
With the military occupation of Lucknow there was a swift and cruel retribution against the inhabitants of the city. The barbarities of Delhi were repeated. The city of Lucknow had to be punished so that its fate could be held up as an example of what would happen to an entire city if it opposed British rule. The objective was to strike terror among the 'subject race'. The entire layout of the city was transformed. The task of reshaping Lucknow was entrusted to military engineers led by Col. Robert Napier. A large part of the densely populated area around Macchi Bhawan, the traditional centre of the city, was demolished. Nearly two-fifths of the entire city was destroyed and the residents uprooted. One pro English Historian, Munshi Mendi Lal Stated the situation after the British Control. "All of a sudden, city demolition started. A typical type of excavators were used. The madrasis, negroes were forced to work in order to carry out the destruction work of walled construction and high rise buildings were excavated; even the foundations. The destruction work continued regiment after regiment. The ground houses of very famous persons were razed to the ground using bulldozers."¹³

Lamenting this destruction of Lucknow, Syed Mohd Wazir (Son of Mufti Mir Abbas) writes:-

"Masjidein Khudti hain, mutlaq bhi nahin jai nawaz,
Hazrat Isa hain ab Parwardigar e Lucknow,
Hoo sadak par gard udti hai ki khaliq ki panaah,
Kor kar de chashme bina ko ghubar-e-lucknow".

The post-1857 policy left an indelible mark on the urban configuration of Lucknow. The city was never the same again.

The majestic Sibtainabad Imambada, which was no exception to the barbarities of the British, was attacked and occupied by the Sikh troops of the British army on March 13th 1858, on their way to the assault on Begum Hazrat Mahal and her loyal freedom fighters at the Qaiserbagh, that finally led to the recapture of Lucknow. "Two companies of the 10th Foot and about a hundred men of the Ferozapore Sikhs formed a storming party, feeble resistance was offered and the troops pressed on to an outlying building of the Kaiser Bagh Palaces"¹⁴ The local hooligans could not withstand the attractions of loot. They stripped the Imambada of everything of value. The horrific plunder of the Imambada Sibtainabad on the 14th of March



1858 is recorded in the History Of The Indian Mutiny 1857-1858 Vol II by Col. G.B. Malleson, London, published by William H. Allen and company in 1879 on pages 390-391. He writes "Early on the morning of the 14th, the heavy guns, at a distance of thirty yards, were still pounding at the breach — " the 8-inch shot, at this short distance, walking through three or four thick masonry walls in succession as if they had been so much paper. The enemy were replying from the walls with musketry fire. At length, about 9 o'clock in the morning, the breach was reported practicable; and the stormers, who had been drawn up, awaiting the signal, received the order to assault.

The Macchi Bhawan or the old citadel of Lucknow, Felice Beato, 1858

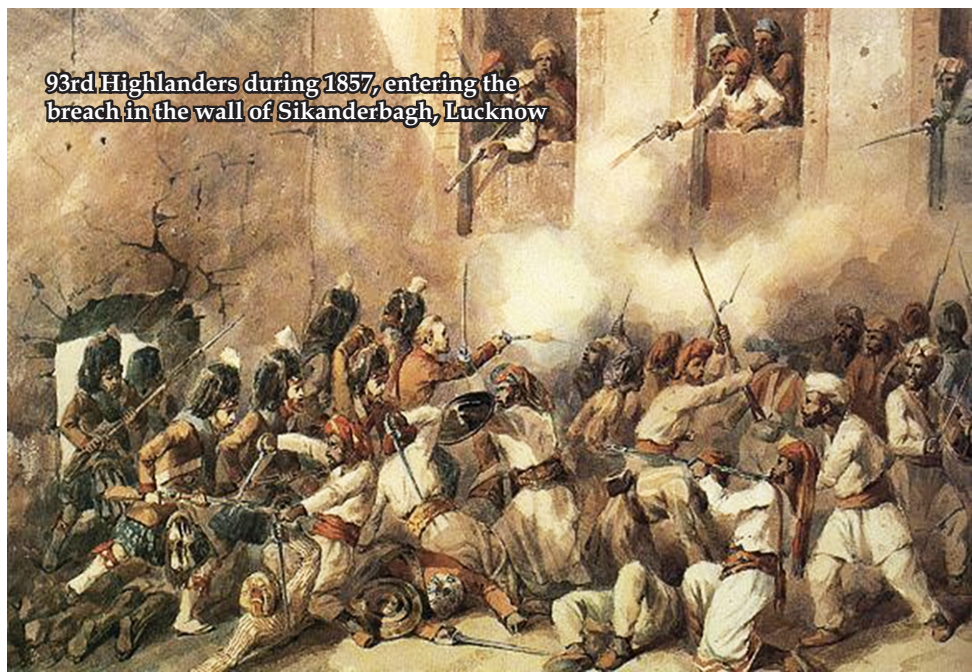


The storming party was composed of sixty men of Brasyer's Sikhs and two companies of the 10th Foot, supported by the remainder of the two regiments. These men, gallantly led, dashed at the breach with all the impetuosity of their pent-up energies. The defenders waited to receive them; nor was it until after a very sharp struggle that they were forced back in disorder. Once forced back, they fled as though panic-stricken, and in a few minutes the Imambara was in the possession of the stormers. The support and reserve followed, completing the lodgment. In the assault there fell a very gallant officer of the regiment of Ferozpur, Captain Da Costa, who had volunteered for this special service. He had lived a life "which had brought him many enemies, but the hostility of the bitterest of them would have changed to admiration had they witnessed the heroic manner in

which he led his men to the assault. The gain of the Imambara did not quench the.... The rebels were in such haste to save themselves' that, emerging from the Imambara through the great gateway into the road, they ran as fast as they could to the Kaisar Bagh. Brasyer's Sikhs, burning to avenge Da Costa's death, dashed after them as they fled, and a few men of the 10th joined in the pursuit..." He rests next to the grave of Major Hodson in the sprawling lawns of Lamartiniere.

It is ironic that evidence of war has been recently discovered outside the tomb of this man of peace. Renovations of Hazratganj in December 2010 uncovered an enormous 25 kg cannon ball embedded in the soil in front of the Imambada.¹⁵

Historical records reveal that the then existing Christ Church came under fire of the freedom fighters, the heaviest of which was between 31st July to 5th August 1857. The British were



My Awareness of Lucknow's rich heritage was triggered by my dear Friend Hyder and under his tutelage one understood the gross neglect it was under, during my first posting to this City of Nabobs in 2005. A keen student of Histoarchaeology I followed my initiation with a bit of research and book study. On my second posting to the City in 2013, I was invited for a Majlis at Sibtainabad and was struck with awe and Wonder at its transformation from an encroached decrepit structure of yore into a Shining Fresh original look, sans encroachment renovated to its original fabled Landmark status in this heritage town of Awadh. It was a wondrous experience to perceive the sweat and tears that had gone behind this humongous task. The Cutting through all the bureaucratic red tape and finding the right tools and tradesmen is indeed a Commendable achievement..It's a well deserved lifetime recognition Hyder the heritage lover has achieved through his passion..My Compliments and Kudos to this grand achiever. Jai Hind.



Brigadier Surendra Prasad
Deputy GOC, Guwahati Sub Area.



It seems like yesterday when I remembered visiting Imambara Sibtainabad. We lived in Purana Qila (Old fort in those days) which is close to Hazratgunj. My late father Sri T.C.Bali was a frequent visitor of Shah Najaf, Sibtainabad & nearby maqbaras. I accompanied him most of the times. I loved playing games in the vast lawns of Shah Nazaf with my friends who lived there and was amused to see the foot prints of The Prophet. Honestly speaking as a child visiting Imambara Sibtainabad was not such a pleasant occasion even though the building was imposing one. Imambara used to be in a dilapidated state. The naked bricks were visible & interiors too were in shabby conditions. A part of the Imambara was in the possession of a carpenter. There were families living , whether legally or illegally I don't know , in the surrounding quarters. There were several motor garages giving a ghastly appearance of a junkyard. The outermost gates were encroached by the petty shopkeepers. Overall the Imambara was in a pretty bad state devoid of beauty. Then came a mass movement in late nineties to liberate the Imambara from its ailments. Slowly slowly management changed hands & took over by the young educated youths who have the wisdom & vision to repair the Imambara with the techniques of yore. They gave new life to the intricate art work in its interiors.

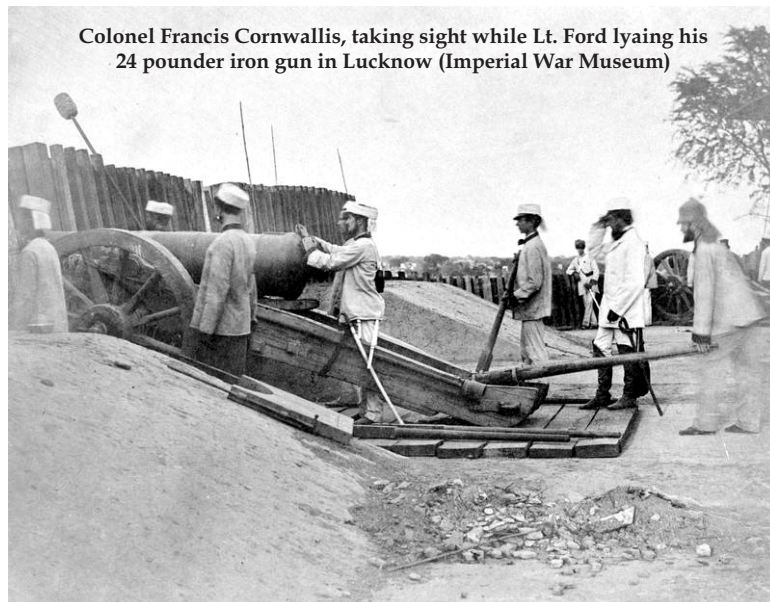
Now this beautiful Imambara has a full calendar for religious activities as well as social events participated by the people of all the religions too. I hope the same zeal & spirit will be shown towards those monuments /buildings which are still bearing the apathy of ASI, HAT & Lucknowites.

KK Bali,
A Senior Citizen, and an ardent Heritage Lover



Aerial view of the Imambada. Picture credits - Ms. Mohsina Mirza

beseiged and used the church as a store house for ghee. History records that at one stage, they seriously considered blowing up the church but gave up the idea to save gunpowder which was scarce. In the period from 1858, till its being rebuilt in the year 1860, the British used Imambada Sibtainabad as a Church. Author Yogesh Praveen writes in his Lucknownama that Lord Canning on his visit to Lucknow attended the Sunday Mass in the open area of the Imambada.¹⁶



Colonel Francis Cornwallis, taking sight while Lt. Ford lying his 24 pounder iron gun in Lucknow (Imperial War Museum)

The Monument is surrounded by haphazard and improper constructions from all sides, adversely affecting its archaeological status and grandeur. "The Imambada which is loved and revered had been surely on its way of becoming a lost monument"¹⁷

Only two of the gateways, one on the front, opposite the Halwasiya market and the other at the entrance of the Imambada are extant today, but are facing the threat of decay and destruction by the encroachers which include the high and mighty businessmen of Lucknow. Archaeological Survey of India (A.S.I.) has, done a yeoman's job in restoring part of the main Imambada structure in its control, in the form of a hall with decorated archways, still, lots needs to be done by the concerned stakeholders which include the Archaeological Survey of India, the Wakf Board, the District Administration, the Municipal Corporation and the Lucknow Development Authority, who need to ensure that this majestic monument is not only restored, but also maintained regularly.

Sibtainabad Imambara appears to have been jinxed from the beginning. Its construction, commenced by Amjad Ali Shah "Hazrat", could only be completed after his death, by his successor, Wajid Ali Shah, the last King of Awadh. As it had the twin purpose of housing the mortal remains of Amjad Ali Shah, as well as for holding majlis and obsequies related to Moharram, it is commonly known as 'Maqbara' by the general populace. The edifice, although built on a much smaller scale, as compared to Asafi Imambara or Shahnajaf, does not lack in aesthetics or functionality.



It suffered severe damage during 1857, and after Lucknow fell, the structure was put to use as a Sunday church by the British. The land on its periphery was parcelled and handed over to Anglo-Indian families for residential and commercial purpose. Soon, it lost its original architectural features and function, and even after Independence, it could not be restored.

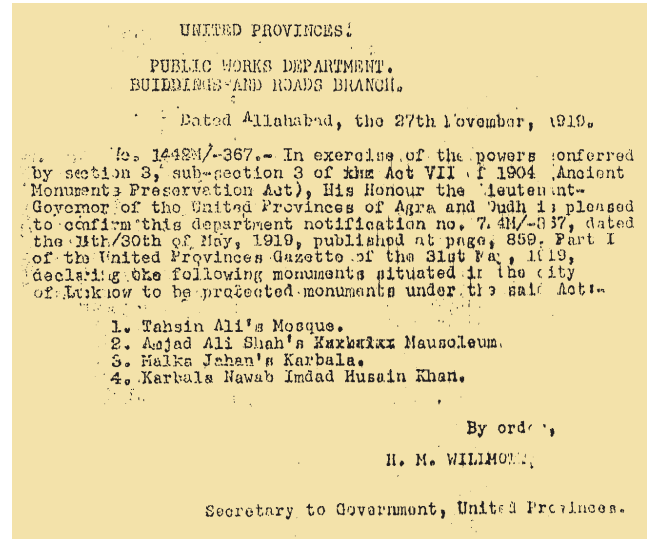
After presenting a ruinous look for several decades, surrounded by shanties, shops and garbage, public minded citizens of Lucknow have come forth and taken commendable initiative for restoring the look and purpose of the Imambara. A lot has been done, and a lot remains to be done. Understandably, progress is slow due to multiple issues, both religious and legal, but I am confident that ultimately the structure will regain its original glory and become another landmark of Lucknow.

I wish all those involved in the restoration work, the very best for their endeavours.

Dr PC Sarkar,
Principal Scientist, ICAR-NIRJAFT, Regent Park Tollygunge,
Kolkata 700040 & Author: Buildings, Begums and the British

THE TREK TO CONSERVATION

Declared a protected monument in 1919, Imambada Sibtainabad went into the hands of Lucknow Improvement Trust (later Lucknow Development Authority) under a deed of Sale of 14th October 1921, executed by one Sultan Bahadur, claiming himself to be a descendant of the Late King Amjad Ali Shah, a claim which has been seriously challenged by the direct descendants of Amjad Ali Shah. The sale deed mentions the area of the Imambada Sibtainabad to be 16 Bighas 7 biswas 12 biswansis and eleven kachwansis. The said sale deed made a further stipulation that the "Imambada Proper" and the "Mosque" were exempt from sale. The sellers were to receive an annuity for the annual repair and maintenance of the Imambada, which, as it transpires from a perusal of the records, never was actually used for the purpose. A correspondence of May and June 1945 under the signatures of the then Deputy Commissioner of Lucknow and Chairman of the Improvement Trust testifies that the "building is in a dilapidated condition and in the middle of the floor of the imambada, the beams which formed a vault over the grave of the late king have collapsed in a heap of rubble". The Lucknow Improvement Trust allotted various portions of the Mahal Sarai and the adjoining quarters to the Anglo Indians for residential purposes.



RECEIVED
17 OCT 1922
10596
LUCKNOW IMPROVEMENT TRUST

To,
The Officer in charge of
Improvement Trust, Lucknow

Sir,

We the undersigned beg most respectfully to submit that there is an Imambarrah known as Sibtainabad Imambarrah at Lucknow founded by our grand-father the late Amjad Ali Shah and established by our late revered father Wajid Ali Shah the last King of Oudh who on account of historical events brought down to Calcutta as Political Prisoner and as such he was compelled to leave the Imambarrah in charge of his relative. The said Imambarrah, we understand, is being demolished and removed as having been within the Improvement Scheme of

Letter from the Sons of Wajid Ali Shah to the Lucknow Improvement Trust to prevent the demolition of Imambada Sibtainabad, dated 11 October 1922

of the town, with the consent of one Sultan Bahadur who alleges to be the proprietor of the property. The real owner of the property being the sons and daughters of the late Wahid Ali Shah it can not be disposed of unless the claim is settled with the owners. We therefore ~~the~~ solicit the favour of your restraining the demolition and removal and of with-holding the payment of any kind of claim or advance till our memorial and claim are decided by the proper authority.

We further beg to submit that a memorial will be submitted at an early date for the consideration of Government

We have

Ran. J. L. W.

We have the honour to
Sir,

Your most obedient servants,
Mirza Ind. Bahar
Mirza Bahar
Dated, Iron-gate,
Garden-Reach,
Matia-uraj, 24-
Parganas, the 11th
October 1922
Sultan Mirza



The Damaged ceiling of the central hall



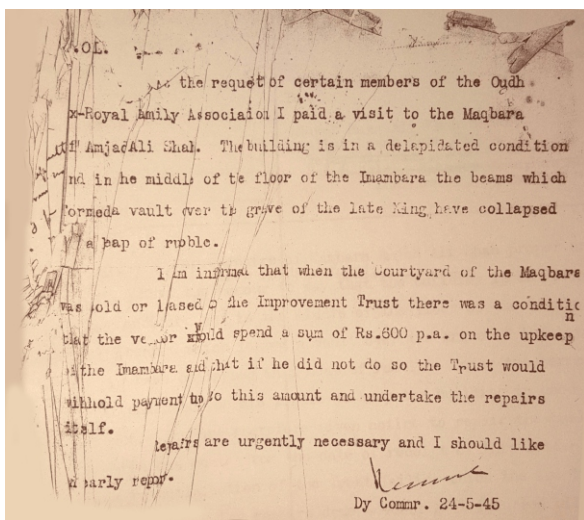
The Damaged ceiling of the Shah Nasheen



Repairing the Mahal Serai



Forlorn Mahal Serai, 2009



Letter of the Dy Comms. Lucknow to the alleged successors of King Amjad Ali Shah for maintaining the Monument from the annuity received

After independence the Directorate of Agriculture and the census office procured possession of the two main halls and made material changes in the building, to suit their own requirements. The Archaeological Survey of India, being the major stakeholder and guardian of the monument could not do much to save the monument from being vandalised, citing resource and man power crunch, though the real fact seems to be its engagement in the conservation of ticketed monuments of Lucknow which included the Residency, the Asafi Imambada and the forlorn Bibiapur Kothi. All through these years, the Imambada Sibtainabad and its precincts kept getting altered, defaced and ruined with each passing day, with the main Imambada complex also having become dilapidated and inhabitable.



Inner Hall of the Imambada under repairs 2014



LDA Team with Adv. Mohd. Kausar Jah, inspecting the encroachments around the Monument

All the laws, be they Central or State, draw attainability and validity from the Constitution of India. The legal system has several provisions for the protection and preservation of monuments and heritage.

The Constitution of India under Article 51A(f) makes it a fundamental duty of every Indian "(f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture . Article 49 of the Constitution further adds, about the Protection of monuments and places and objects of national importance. – It shall be the obligation of the State to protect every monument or place or object of artistic or historic interest , declared by or under law made by Parliament to be of national importance, from spoliation, disfigurement, destruction ,removal, disposal or export ,as the case may be.

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 defines an 'Ancient Monument ' in the following terms :-Ancient Monument means any structure, erection or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription or monolith which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than 100 years and includes – Remains of an ancient monument, Site of an ancient monument, Such portion of land adjoining the site of an ancient monument as may be required for fencing or covering in or otherwise preserving such monument, The means of access to, and convenient inspection of, an ancient monument.

As the monuments were being encroached and destroyed with impunity, the Archaeological Survey of India, in discussions with the Ministry of Culture , came up with a Gazette notification on 16.06.1992 that prohibited new constructions within a 100 metres radius of any Centrally Protected monument in the country. The act, however, allowed for controlled development within the regulated area of the monument, which was fixed at 200 metres, subject to a prior permission from the concerned Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India.

In 2010 , the Act of 1958 was further amended to ensure that the ambience of the protected monuments was not spoiled because of modern constructions, especially within the prohibited and regulated areas. The Act specifies that there will be a protected monument surrounded by a protected area beyond which lies the prohibited area for 100 m, followed by a regulated area of 200 m. The legislation also provided for identification of all unauthorised structures that may have come up in the regulated and prohibited areas after 1992 and action would be

श्री प्रभात कुमार शाह
संयुक्त सचिव
सांस्कृतिक कार्य अनुभाग
उ० प्र० शासन
लखनऊ

1/3/89. रम. 11 6433

लखनऊ स्थिति ऐतिहासिक इमारत तिकन्दर बाग गेट अमजद अली शाह
मकबरे-अवैध कब्जे ।

प्रोमान,

दुबया आप अपने पत्र संख्या रम०रम०रम० 58/वार-41121/90
दिनांक 10/7/90 का अवलोकन करें, इस सम्बन्ध में विनम्र निवेदन है कि तिकन्दर
बाग जो कि राष्ट्रीय महत्व का स्मारक है, उसमें उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के कृषि
विभाग, जल संस्थान एवं राष्ट्रीय वनस्पति अनुसंधान संस्थान का अवैध अतिक्रमण
एवं कब्जा है, इसी प्रकार अमजद अली शाह के मकबरे में जनगणना विभाग एवं
कुछ फर्नीचर की दुकानें, लखनऊ विकास, प्रधिकरण के बचावर अधि। ने दिये गये
है इस सम्बन्ध में इस कार्यालय द्वारा अनेकों पत्र लिखे जा चुके हैं स्मारक को क्षति
पहुँचाने पर कानूनी कार्यवाही की गई तथा अतिक्रमण हटाने के लिये अनेक पत्र लिखे
गये और उच्चतरीय बैठक भी हुई पर कोई ठोस नतीजा नहीं निकला ।

भनदीय
अधीक्षक पुरातत्त्वविद

1/3/89. रम. 11 6434-35 दिनांक ... 12.7.90

प्रतिलिपि:-

1. निदेशक उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य पुरातत्त्वविदें संगठन कैलर बाग लखनऊ
2. संरक्षक सहायक श्री रम०रम०रम० खान तिकन्दर बाग लखनऊ

अधीक्षक पुरातत्त्वविद

भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Archaeological Survey of India
Office of the Superintending Archaeologist
Lucknow Circle, Kendriya Bhawan,
Aliganj, Lucknow
F. No. 10-1/65/08-M
Dated.....



भारतीय पुरातत्व सर्वेक्षण
कार्यालय अधीक्षण पुरातत्वविद्
लखनऊ मण्डल, केन्द्रीय भवन,
अलीगंज, लखनऊ
फा.सं. 10-1/65/08 स्पा. 3465-66
दिनांक. 19.12.08.....

TEL / FAX 2323904 / 2328220, E-Mail: lucknowcircle@yahoo.co.in / Lucknowcircle@rediffmail.com

सभा में,

जिलाधिकारी,
लखनऊ।

विषय: राष्ट्रीय संरक्षित स्मारक अमजद अली शाह मकबरा, हजरत गंज, लखनऊ की छत का एक भाग गिरने के संबंध में।

महोदय,

उपर्युक्त विषय में सूचना प्राप्त हुई है कि संरक्षित स्मारक अमजद अली शाह मकबरा, हजरत गंज की छत का एक हिस्सा चारिश के कारण गिर गया है लेकिन किसी के हताहत होने की सूचना नहीं है। भारतीय पुरातत्व सर्वेक्षण द्वारा तत्काल मलबा हटाकर मरम्मत का कार्य प्रारम्भ किया जा चुका है।

जैसा कि पूर्व में भी आपको अवगत कराया जा चुका है कि स्मारक अमजद अली शाह मकबरा के परिसर एवं मुख्य द्वारों पर अनकों परिवार लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण द्वारा आवंटित हिस्सों में निवास कर रहे हैं जिन्हें अन्यत्र विस्थापित करने हेतु आपसे अनुरोध किया जा चुका है। लेकिन अभी तक कोई कार्रवाई नहीं हो सकी है तथा उक्त अतिक्रमण की वजह से स्मारक का संरक्षण कार्य भी नहीं हो पा रहा जिससे स्मारक की स्थिति दिन-प्रतिदिन जीर्णशीर्ण होती जा रही है। आज की घटना में किसी प्रकार के जानमाल की छति नहीं हुई लेकिन यदि समय रहते स्मारक को अतिक्रमण मुक्त कराकर संरक्षण कार्य नहीं कराया गया तो भविष्य में गम्भीर घटना हो सकती है। ऐसी ही स्थिति लखनऊ स्थित अनेक स्मारकों की है जहां पर कई परिवार अवैध रूप से या संबंधित ट्रस्ट द्वारा आवंटित हिस्सों में निवास कर रहे हैं।

अतः आपसे अनुरोध है कि स्मारक परिसरों में निवास करने वाले परिवारों को अन्यत्र विस्थापित करने हेतु आवश्यक निर्देश जारी करने का कष्ट करें ताकि स्मारकों को अतिक्रमण मुक्त कराकर उनका संरक्षण कार्य पुरातत्वीय मानकों के तहत करीया जा सके तथा किसी भी संभावित दुर्घटना को टाला जा सके।

भवदीय

अधीक्षण पुरातत्वविद्

प्रतिनिधि: उपाध्यक्ष, लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण, प्राधिकरण भवन, गोमतीनगर, लखनऊ को सूचनाार्थ।

अधीक्षण पुरातत्वविद्

भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Archaeological Survey of India
Office of the Superintending Archaeologist
Lucknow Circle, Kendriya Bhawan,
Aliganj, Lucknow



भारतीय पुरातत्व सर्वेक्षण
कार्यालय अधीक्षण पुरातत्वविदः
लखनऊ मण्डल, केन्द्रीय भवन
अलीगंज, लखनऊ
फा.सं. 10-1/65/09-ममा.
दिनांक.....

F. No. 10-1/65/09-M-286
Dated... 13-06-2009

TEL / FAX 2323904 / 2328220, E-Mail: lucknowcircle@yahoo.co.in / Lucknowcircle@rediffmail.com

To,

Syed Mohammed Haider Rizvi,
Joint. Mutawalli,
Waqf Imambara, Sibtainabad Mubarak,
A-104, Officers Colony,
Lalbagh, Lucknow.

Sub: **Encroachment in and around Mausoleum of Amjad Ali Shah, Hazratganj, Lucknow.**

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to your letter de.23/05/09 and SMS to the Dy. Superintending Archeologist of this office and E-mail dt. 10/06/09 to the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India on the subject cited above.

In this regard, it is to bring to your notice that monument-complex of Amjad Ali Shah's Mausoleum has been in residential and commercial use since very long time as it has not been in the possession of the Archaeological Survey of India ever since its protection in 1919. The major portion of the complex has been purchased by the Lucknow Improvement Trust (Lucknow Development Authority) in 1921 which was later allotted to the individuals for residential and commercial purpose.

The Archaeological Survey of India has regularly been requesting the district authorities, Lucknow Development Authority and other concerned authorities time and again to get the whole complex vacated by allotting alternate accommodation to the occupants and handover the whole monument complex to the Archaeological Survey of India for its proper maintenance as per its original character. But, unfortunately nothing concrete has been done so far in this direction which has resulted in the continuous neglect of the portion under occupation of the allottees.

We have made provisions for repairing the roof of the gateway but we feel constrained to take up the maintenance work on this portion as it is fully occupied with little scope for any conservation work unless it is got vacated.

In so far as the encroachment/unauthorised constructions reported by you, it is to inform you that we have immediately approached the concerned police station as well as district and police authorities in the matter and have also issued notices to the offenders (Copies enclosed).

We are thankful to you for your conscious efforts in highlighting the issues related to this glorious monument and invite you for a joint inspection on 16.06.09 with the officers of this office for chalking out further course of action to resolve them at the earliest.

Yours faithfully,

Superintending Archaeologist.

initiated. The quantum of punishment for violating the law has been spelled out and made stringent — two years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1 Lakh. This legislation was introduced in the wake of the Judgment of the Delhi High Court passed in the case of EMCA Construction Co. v. Archaeological Survey of India and others¹⁸.

A Judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, titled **Rajeev Mankotia v Secretary to President of India**¹⁹ sounds a word of caution "We avail this opportunity to direct the Government of India to maintain all national monuments under the respective Acts referred to above and to ensure that all of them are properly maintained so that the cultural and historical heritage of India and the beauty and grandeur of the monuments, sculptures secured through breathless and passionate labour workmanship, craftsmanship and the skills of the Indian architects, artists and masons is continued to be preserved. They are pride of Indians and places of public visit".

Though the law is strong enough, what is required is the sensitization of the public at large and inculcation of the values for the conservation of cultural heritage of our country. Awareness drives for the school going children in the schools, the initiative of “Own a Monument” by the NGOs, Business groups and companies under their CSR Schemes , whereby they initiate sensitization drives within monuments, which is the need of the hour.

The conservation of our precious heritage buildings is not a job which can be accomplished by any one agency . It requires concerted efforts of all stakeholders, rather every section of Society –and most importantly our young generation. Mohammad Haider, Apart from being a lawyer by profession, is a great heritage enthusiast who has deep concern for monuments . He has been fighting for the cause at many levels since last many years for making the monuments encroachment free and their maintenance as per their ancient character. He is now bringing out a Newsletter to highlight conservation efforts and sensitizing people at large. I wish him success in his endeavors more young people are inspired to join him in his efforts of creating awareness to save our heritage for posterity.



Indu Prakash

Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Lucknow Circle.



भारतीय पुरातत्व सर्वेक्षण (भारत सरकार) लखनऊ मण्डल के वरिष्ठ संरक्षक सहायक के बतौर मुझे लखनऊ पूर्वी स्थित राष्ट्रीय संरक्षित स्मारकों का प्रभारी बनाया गया था। उस समय इस क्षेत्र के अन्य स्मारकों की तरह मकबरा अमजद अली शाह (सिब्तैनबाद इमामबाड़ा) की भी स्थिति बड़ी दयनीय थी। इमामबाड़े के मध्य प्रथम तथा द्वितीय हाल में जनगणना विभाग, (भारत सरकार) का भण्डारण था और दोनों तरफ तथा पीछे के शाहनशीन बाग में मालिक आदि द्वारा फर्नीचर के कारखाने चलाये जा रहे थे। चबूतरों पर भी उनके अवैध कब्जे थे। जिन पर अस्थाई शौचालय तथा कारखाने से संबंधित फर्नीचर बनाये जाने वाले लकड़ियों का भण्डारण था। इमामबाड़े के अन्दर जाने वाले रास्तों को भी अतिक्रमिit किया हुआ था इसके अतिरिक्त इसके आस-पास भी अनेकों अतिक्रमण थे।

जनाब मौलाना मुजतहिद कल्बे जवाद नक्वी साहेब, सैय्यद मोहम्मद हैदर और उनके साथियों के अथक प्रयास और वलिहना ज़ज्बात तथा कठिन प्रयासों से इस इमामबाड़े के स्वरूप और उनके उपयोग को पुनः बहाली प्राप्त हुई तथा मोहरम व अन्य सुनिश्चित तारीखों पर मजलिसों का आयोजन होना शुरू हुआ।

मेरे स्थानान्तरण के बाद भी पुरातत्व विभाग द्वारा विशेष रुचि लेते हुए इमामबाड़े पर संरक्षण कार्य किया गया। जो वर्तमान में भी चलाया जा रहा है, परन्तु विभाग की सक्रियता को गति देने में सैय्यद मोहम्मद हैदर साहब का विशेष योगदान स्पष्ट है जिसको समस्त लखनऊ वासी स्मारकों तथा लखनऊ की गंगा-जमुनी तहजीब से प्रेम रखने वाले भली भांति परिचित हैं। श्री हैदर न केवल सिब्तैनबाद इमामबाड़े बल्कि लखनऊ तथा आस-पास के क्षेत्रों में स्थित संरक्षित तथा गैर-संरक्षित स्मारकों की दशा सुधारने के लिए सतत प्रयत्नशील रहते हैं। मैं अपनी और अटल सेवा समिति की ओर से उनको इस योगदान के लिए हार्दिक बधाई देता हूँ।

M.A. Khan

*Advocate and formerly conservation Assistant,
Archaeological Survey of India, Lucknow*

In the absence of effective legal provisions, heritage bi-laws and public awareness, the magnificent Imambara Sibtainabad, though a Centrally Protected Monument, had been at the verge of losing its original character and entity like hundreds of those heritage buildings which vanished completely during last three decades.

The main building of the Imambara had been leased out to a firm and remained in use as furniture godown for a long time without any maintenance. After persistent efforts the main building could be evicted and the arduous task of conserving the same could be taken up by the ASI which is almost completed . This could only be possible with committed efforts and support of Imambara Committee under the stewardship of Muhammad Haider who filed several PIL's and petitions against Local Bodies, Govt. Of U.P. and other individuals paving way to the scientific conservation and overall development of Sibtainabad Imambara . The joint efforts are still on and will continue till the entire Imambara precincts are evicted, restored and developed to its pristine glory.



Chandra Bhal Misra

*Former Superintending Archaeologist,
Archaeological Survey of India, Lucknow Circle*

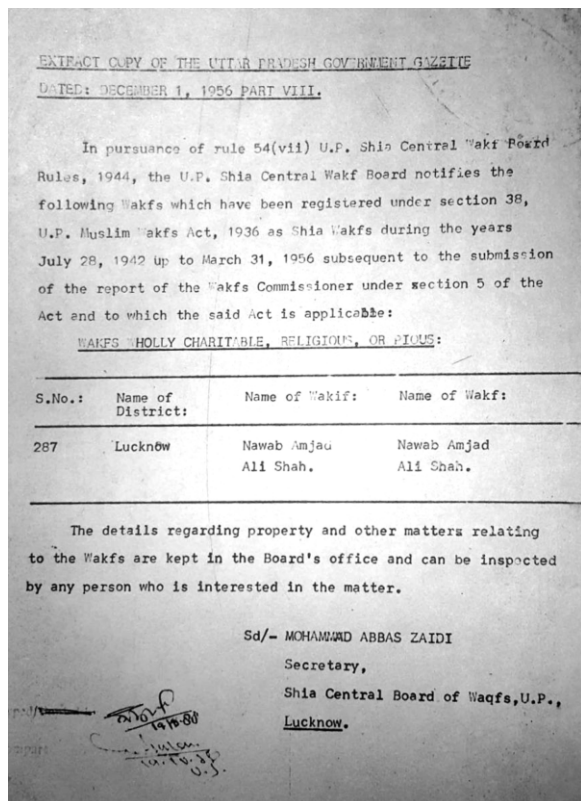


The Imambada being under the illegal occupation, despite it being a protected monument under the ASI, denying the community of its right to use the Imambada for the religious observances had been a concern, the cry for which echoed during muharram, but it was not until the year 2005, when the Shia community of Lucknow started serious discussions and deliberation. A clarion call by the leading Shia Cleric Maulana Kalbe Jawad , specially to the shia youth did ring the bell, and gave momentum to the movement. Members of the community including Alyasa Rizvi, a visionary and a journalist, Mukhtar Anis, a veteran politician and the then Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Board of Wakfs, members of the Tanzeem-e-Pasdaraan-e-Husain, alongwith thousands of members of the community and heritage lovers made a mass protest, a voice that echoed upto 5 Kalidas Marg, the official residence of the Chief Minister of the State, who ordered for an immediate vacation of the premises , and its handing over to the Shia Central Board of Wakfs .

Committees of Management of the Wakf Imambada Sibtainabad : Records go on to prove that the Wakf Imambada Sibtainabad Mubarak was registered with the Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Board of Wakfs for a considerably long time, though the only property in possession of the Wakf seemed to be the Masjid of the Imambada, a contemporary building, where the religious observances continued to be held under the Mutawalliship of Shri Gauhar Agha Saheb and then Shri Alim Mehdi Naqvi Saheb, the renowned gentlemen of Shia community, who kept corresponding with the Shia Central Board of Wakfs and the Government, sensitizing them and preventing an imminent sale of the quarters in the Imambada campus.

For all the years preceding the formation of the present committee, the members of The Anjuman-e-Darbar-e-Husaini, a prominent Shia Anjuman of Lucknow, which included its General Secretary Kazim Husain, a social activist and a former corporator, the Naib Sadr Fazil Husain and dozens of the members of this anjuman kept the Masjid of the Imambada “live” by offering regular prayers and making regular visits and maintaining the mosque for more than four decades. Shia Mujtahid Maulana Sheikh Rizwan Husain Waiz took up the responsibility of leading the congregational Namaz in this masjid , a responsibility which he performed till his demise for the hereafter.

Anjuman-e-Darbar-e-Husaini, on the initiative of Fazil Husain, its Naib Sadr established the Nauchanda (the new moon) Alam and Nauchanda Majlis in the Imambada, in the Islamic month of Shaban, 1425 Hijri (corresponding to year 2004 of the Georgian Calendar), which is taken out on every nauchanda, thursday from the Masjid , upto the Imambada, a tradition which continues till date. The First Majlis in the Imambada



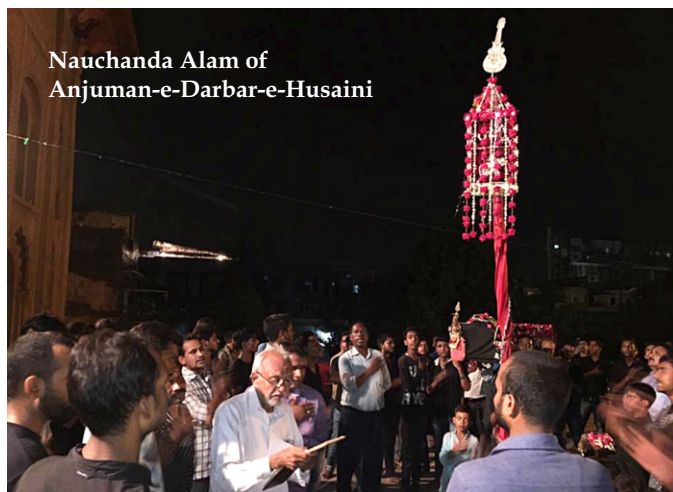
Masjid , under the aegis of this Anjuman was addressed by Maulana Kalbe Jawad saheb in the month of shaban,1425 Hijri.

Soon after the vacation of the Imambada complex in February 2005 and its being formally handed over to the Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Board of Wakfs, the Board constituted a fresh committee of management on 14.03.2005 under the patronship of Maulana Kalbe Jawad, with Mr Nadeem Agha as a mutawalli for a 3 years term for the proper management of the Wakf and ensuring the performance of religious observances. This committee continued to ensure the religious observances in the Imambada, but could not succeed much in ensuring the removal of encroachments and repairs to the Imambada. This committee, for the first time after the liberation of the Imambada , organized the Ashara-e-Majalis in the Imambada which were addressed by Maulana Nusrat Jafri Saheb, from Bihar , which was attended by thousands of devotees of the Shia community. Next year , it was Maulana Zeeshan Saheb from Allahabad who addressed the Ashra Majlises, followed by Mohammad Mian Abidi, who addressed the Ashra Majlises in the following year.

The Ashra at Imambada Sibtainabad, thereafter, year on year is a regular religious observance inviting thousands of devotees of all castes creeds and descents. Eminent Shia Clerics including Maulana Mirza Mohammad Athar saheb, Maulana Kalbe Sadiq Saheb, Maulana Ibne Haider saheb , Maulana Hamidul Hasan saheb, Maulana Kalbe Jawad saheb, Maulana Agha Roohi saheb, Maulana Safi Haider saheb, Maulana Yasoob Abbas saheb , Maulana Ali Rizwan Zaidpuri saheb, Maulana Abbas Irshad saheb, Maulana Abid Bilgrami saheb, Maulana Kalbe Rushaid saheb, Maulana Abbas Irshad saheb, Maulana Meesam Zaidi saheb and Maulana Saif Abbas sahib, besides a number of other eminent clerics have addressed thousands of devotees from the mimbar of Imambada Sibtainabad ever since.

The year 2008 marks a watershed in the history of the crusade for the restoration of the lost glory of Imambada Sibtainabad. The Shia Central Board of Wakfs , Uttar Pradesh constituted a fresh committee of Management for the Imambada, with experts from the fields of Law, Business, Theology and Management, under the overall guidance of the leading Shia Cleric Maulana Kalbe Jawad Saheb on 15.04.2008. The committee took over the management soon after the issuance of the order and initiated a prompt and time bound action, post the identification of issues pertaining to the Imambada, and making a team , dividing the actions to be initiated by the respective teams.

Mr Imtiaz Alam, one of the then two Joint Mutawallis assisted by **Mr Kazim Husain**, the President of the Committee and **Mr Fazil Husain** the Naib Mutawalli, **Mr Mansoor Alam**, Member of the Committee, **Mr Zuhair Mehdi** and a few others took up the work of:-



- i. Organizing majlises and ensuring the religious observances all through the year and coordinating with the Maulana / Mujtahid for addressing Majlis during Ashoora.
- ii. Arranging for and procuring the royal insignias of the Karbala (Alams, Patkas, Taboot and the various items to be used in Muharram) and , the
- iii. Arranging for the Tabarrukat for Muharram programmes.
- iv. Collection of contributions for the performance of religious observances (in the initial days, the Imambada did not have any source of income, and the daily expenses and the expenses for the religious observances were met by the office bearers of the committee and the members of the community by way of donations)

Mr Syed Mohammad Haider Rizvi, Joint Mutawalli, a Lawyer, assisted by **Mr Hamid Ali-Advocate**, **Mr Nadeem Murtaza-Advocate**, took up the responsibility of restoration and proper repairs of the Imambada , covering the following tasks:-

- i. Collating the documents of the Imambada, more particularly with respect to its ownership and protection by the Archaeological Survey of India.
- ii. Corresponding with the concerned stakeholders, including the Archaeological Survey of India, the District Administration, the Lucknow Development Authority, the Municipal Corporation, the Police , the Public Works Department and the Department of Culture, Government of India and maintaining proper records.
- iii. Follow-up Action on the correspondences using the RTI.
- iv. RTI Appeals before the State Information Commission and their regular follow-up.
- v. Sensitization drives with the help of local Media
- vi. Use of Social Media Network, creating a Facebook profile for the Imambada.

These initiatives, while ensuring the religious observances, also paved way for a proper and systematic repair and renovation of the Imambada Sibtainabad, by the Archaeological Survey of India, post the removal of encroachments from the Imambada premises and the adjoining campus. The efforts of the committee in general and the Mutawalli Syed Mohammad Haider Rizvi@Mohammad Haider in particular, towards the restoration of the Imambada have been lauded internationally, and the end result is that the Imambada stands fully restored, paving way for the replication of this success story for the other and similar lost monuments.



Imambada Sibtainabad has been our neighborhood and I have seen the monument straggling for life, and its rebirth. The efforts of Mr Mohammad Haider, the use of the innovative tool of the RTI, the PIL, all have borne fruits in the form of a complete revival and transformation of this majestic monument.

I am sure that this monument's revival & rebirth will provide a much needed boost to the spirits of Heritage lovers to take up many such genuine causes, which do impact each one of us.

Gaurav Mehrotra
Advocate High Court, Lucknow

इमामबाड़ा सिबतैनबाद, जो अवध के चौथे बादशाह अमजद अली शाह का मकबरा है, यद्यपि शहर की हृदयस्थली हजरतगंज में स्थित है, नजरो से लगभग छुपा हुआ था एवं अतिक्रमणों से चौतरफा घिरा था। इमामबाड़े के मुतवल्ली मोहम्मद हैदर और उनके साथियों ने इस इमामबाड़े की जिस निःस्वार्थ भाव से सेवा की और इस इमामबाड़े की भव्यता को पुनःस्थापित किया वो अनुकरणीय है और आने वाली पीढ़ियों के लिए अपनी सांस्कृतिक विरासत को बचाने के लिए एक पहल करने को प्रोत्साहित करेगी। ईश्वर मोहम्मद हैदर तथा उनके साथियों को समाज और मानव सेवा हेतु निरन्तर गतिशील एवं ऊर्जावान बनाये रखें। आप सबको इस सराहनीय पहल के लिए बधाइयाँ।

शम्भू नाथ द्विवेदी, सेवानिवृत्त मुख्य अभियंता, उत्तर प्रदेश सिंचाई विभाग।



The Wakf Imambada Sibtainabad, a “waqf alal-khair”, registered with the Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Board of Wakfs as Wakf No. I-1035, has been performing its responsibilities diligently and has been actively involved in a number of social causes, which include the rendering of support to the needy, poor, downtrodden and oppressed sections of the community. The committee of management of the Imambada Sibtainabad took care of urgent medical needs of one Shan Ali Kazmi, the Saheb-e-Bayaz of one of the oldest anjumans of Lucknow- Anjuman-e-Shah-e-Insho-Ja. Shan Ali Kazmi, a jobless zardozi artist was in deep crisis, in need of an immediate cardio bypass surgery, with a lack of adequate resources even to take care of his daily needs. The committee, after due deliberations, not only sanctioned the required funds to this man in need, but also ensured his expeditious surgery at the SGPGIMS, Lucknow, within the shortest time, while also taking care of his post hospitalization expenses and medical needs. The committee also arranges for monthly provisions of many needy families of the community.



Dar-e-Husain pe milte hain har Khayal Ke Log, Ye ittehad ka Markaz hai Aadmi ke liye.

Sibtain is the combination of the name of two brothers (Hasan and Husain) the two sons of Hazrat Ali (AS), First Cousin of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

We believe that there were one lakh twenty four thousand messengers of God, Adam the First and Prophet Mohammad the Last. Asna Ashari Sect of the Shias believe in twelve Imams: Imam Husain(AS) the maternal grandson of the Prophet (PBUH), the third Imam and Imam Mehdi(AS), the living Imam being the twelfth Imam who is believed to be living in Greenland where the Triangle of Bermuda is. Yazeed, the corrupt King of Syria wanted bait (compromise) with Imam Husain(AS) who refused, hence the battle of Karbala in Iraq on tenth Muharram 61 Hijri where Imam Husain(AS) along with his 72 companions were brutally murdered. To commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Husain(AS), Imambadas are built, where the replicas of Karbala are decorated on the Shahnasheen (an elevated platform). Example Taziya and Zarih (replicas of Mausoleum of Imam Husain(AS)), Alams (Standard of Islamic Army), Zuljenah Horse of Imam Husain(AS), Cradle (Jhoola) of Janab-e-Ali Asghar(AS), the six month old son of Imam Husain(AS).



Lucknow, a legendary city of Nawabs boasts to be the city of Imambadas, whose Iconic Imambada is the Asafi or the Bada Imambada which has the biggest hall of the world, without any support of Iron or Wood. Imambada Sibtainabad right in the heart of Hazratganj is the last monumental Imambada built by King Wajid Ali Shah (1847-1856), the Last King in India for (his father's grave) King Amjad Ali Shah (1842-1847) Son of King Mohammad Ali Shah (1837-1842). Nawab Wajid Ali Shah built an identical Imambada Sibtainabad in Matia Burj Calcutta, where the last King is buried in 1887. Lucknow is proud to be the only city in the world to have the maximum variety of Gumbads and Minars (domes and minarets) and have all religious mausoleums in their original architectural shape for ziyarat. Imambada Sibtainabad was literally sold to Bakshi and Bhandari by one Mr Mohammad Ahmad @ Mummy who claimed to be the descendent of Amjad Ali Shah. The case was contested by Late Hadi Nawab Son of Late Karbalai Nawab.

Imambada Sibtainabad was badly encroached and the main part was rented out for furniture workshop. Sibtainabad Imambada has two huge gates which are dilapidated and the campus around the main lawn is rented out to Christian families and is also known as Maqbara Hazratganj. With regular efforts of Maulana Kalbe Jawwad Saheb and citizens of Lucknow, the main Imambada was relieved of encroachment and is now beautifully conserved for Maatam and Majlis which are regularly held in the Imambada. Mr Mohammad Haider, Lawyer and an activist has played a very important role in conservation and preservation of our spiritual and historical monuments through his RTIs and Writ Petitions. We appeal to the government to allocate special funds for the restoration and conservation of our rich heritage, for which we the citizens of Lucknow shall ever be grateful.

*“Ya Rab mere Marne ko fasaana kar de, Simt-e-Shah-e-Mazloom Rawana kar de,
Hasrat hai ki huun dafn tah-e-khaaq-e-shifa, Mitti meri tasbeeh ka daana kar de”*

Jafar Mir Abdullah
Sheesh Mahal, Lucknow 3

FOREVER FREE: THE ASI RESCUE

Unfortunately, the monument which, although a centrally protected monument, and an important constituent of our history had been long neglected and was reduced to a nothing inspite of the various Constitutional provisions and statutory enactments, the encroachments continued almost in an unabated manner . The sad story continued for ages until some dynamic and inspired youth of the city took up the task of the monument's restoration. The most effective tool being the use of the Right to Information Act, which not only led to the procurement of the copies of the relevant documents from the Lucknow Development Authority and other

public bodies, but also ensured transparency and accountability of various government departments including the Archaeological Survey of India, and, in turn, resulted in timely restoration of the monument.

The monument, though has been a part of the protected monuments of the Archaeological Survey of India ever since 1919, not much could be done to conserve it from the vagaries of time. The documentary evidence which finds place in the recollections herein proves that the alleged descendants of the entombed King, who were provided an annuity for the maintenance of the monument failed in discharging their responsibilities which resulted in further decay and destruction of this monument . The committee of Imambada initiated a strong action, which included the correspondence and follow-up with the highest levels of the governance, which led to a systematic and time bound restoration of the monument by the Archaeological Survey of India. The Superintending Archaeologists of the Archaeological Survey of India. Shri Chandrabhal Misra alongwith the Engineer Shri Inderjeet Singh made a lot of efforts in ensuring the repairs of the majestic edifice during 2009-12. His successors in office, post his retirement continued to follow his footsteps and the

Annual Expenditure made by the ASI towards the repair and maintenance of the Imambada Sibtainabad since the present committee took over the reins in 2008.

Year	Expenditure (in rupees)
2008-09	380016
2009-10	250558
2010-11	4621761
2011-12	2955843
2012-13	4014839
2013-14	3917326
2014-15	2467955
2015-16	1373081
2016-17	1186766



Young historians of La Martiniere College on a visit to Imambada Sibtainabad

Imambada kept getting the support of the Archaeological Survey of India, resulting in the proper restoration of the Imambada in 2016, making an expenditure of Rs. 2.11 Crores (from the year 2008-09 upto the year 2016-17)²⁰.

The efforts of Shri M.A. Khan and Shri Dilip Verma, the Conservation Assistants, who spent a lot of time and made concerted efforts towards the use of proper material and selection of the best workforce for executing a timely and effective execution need a mention. The overall guidance and support of Shri Navratna Kumar Pathak, the then Superintending Archaeologist of the ASI is indeed worth a mention. A special mention needs to be made about the master mason, Ansaruddin, who is the one who traced out the designs, and painted the carvings in the Imambada, restoring the stucco work. His exclusive and intricate workmanship, which was duly published on the facebook profile of Imambada Sibtainabad did attract the attention of many connoisseurs of art, including **Mr Carlyle McFarland**, the celebrated Principal of the all famous Lamartiniere College, Lucknow, who therefore engaged **Ansaruddin** for the renovation and preservation of the Constantia, a task which Ansaruddin so wonderfully executed that his talents got recognized by the French Government, which accorded to him the award of “Medaille D'Honneur Du Travail”, handed over to him at a grand function organized for the purpose by the Lamartiniere College. The French Ambassador to India Mr Alexandre Ziegler visited Lucknow to give away the award to this “monumental” mason in 2016.²¹



The main gate of Imambada Sibtainabad under repairs, 2010

I am indeed blessed to have been born and raised in Lucknow, the city of Nawabs; world famous for its Adub, Nazakat, and Nafasut. The city's heritage, historical monuments, some of which are architectural wonders, unmatched culinary traditions and splendid culture is also too well known. However, since childhood I was saddened to see Lucknow's historical monuments in utter neglect and wondered if this is sustainable. I am very happy to know that a group of heritage lovers have been painfully toiling to restore Lucknow's monuments to its past glory through meticulous restoration and good upkeep thereafter. This is such a commendable achievement and I salute the efforts of this entire group. May their clan grow manifold!



Saurabh Misra
Founder, SAURABH MISRA & ASSOCIATES,
Advocates & International Legal Consultants, Mumbai



The historical marvel of the Siptainabad Imambara and the tomb of Amjad Ali Shah, about which Lang's journal and Russell's diary give the details of attacks, plunder and looting by British, however, the fact remains that encroachments have prevailed in most parts of the Imambara complex for nearly a century and alterations have adversely affected, though part of the complex which includes the main hall is protected by ASI as of now. After the encroachments were removed by the motivation of selfless and consistent efforts of Mr Mohammad Haider and team, an ardent Heritage lover, now bracketed as a “living monument” with the beautiful renovation work of its stucco and is one of the glowing gems of Lucknow's treasure trove of splendid heritage and grandeur.

Vipul B. Varshney
Architect, urban planner, Heritage Activist and Author.
F.I.I.A., A.I.I.I.D., A.I.T.P., M.C.O.A.

OCEAN OF SORROW : OF KARBALA AND MUHARRAM

Karbala in Iraq is the place known in the History of Islam, for being the battlefield between evil and virtue. In 680 AD, Imam Husain(AS) the younger son of Imam Ali along with his closest family members and a few followers achieved martyrdom in the plains of Karbala, Iraq. Karbala, ever since is the corner stone of Institutionalized devotion and mourning, and is remembered in history for the suffering of Prophet Mohammad's family.

It is believed and understood that Imam Husain(AS) and his followers rejoiced in martyrdom on the path of truthfulness and integrity on the 10th day of the month of Muharram. Imam Husain(AS) and his brave army fought fearlessly with the army of Yazid, the ignoble king of Syria. Yazid longed to obtain the oath of allegiance from Imam Husain, the grandson of the Prophet. However, principled as he was Imam Husain(AS) refused to pledge his loyalty to the one who was an epitome of immorality.

Consequently, Imam Husain(AS) was forced to leave his home in the city of Medina. He started his journey towards the city of Kufa with his family and relatives, but was prevented from reaching Kufa and camped at Karbala. Soon Yazid's armies surrounded the camps of Imam Husain(AS) and the saga of torture and suffering began.

Yazid's army launched the offensive and the struggle lasted a few hours, where Imam Husain's men exhibited matchless valour in the face severest of adversities humankind has ever witnessed. One by one all the members of the pious army fell including the infant son of Imam Husain(AS). Finally, it was the Prophet's grandson upon whom were inflicted numerous wounds and his head severed from the body. The dead bodies were left to be trampled by the horses and the battlefield witnessed one of the most gory bloodbath onslaught which outraged the conscience of humanity.



Alams with Patkas, heavily embroidered in traditional zardozi work-Imambada Sibtainadad

The events at Karbala till date narrate the story of a brave contingent which held the flag of Islam high and refused to confer allegiance to the sinful Yazid. Karbala, represents the biggest tragedy not only in the history of Islam but in the history of humanity. This tragedy holds strong the message for mankind to be obedient to the will of the creator and to stay on with the good against the evil.

Regarding the message of Karbala, it is said :

“You resurrected Islam
You showed us truth and falsehood,
Everyone knows how to die after living,
But you taught the world how to live after dying.”

The battle of Karbala witnessed the sufferings that Husain's people were subjected to when Yazid failed to coerce allegiance from the Prince of Islam. Accompanied by 72 of his family and his adherents, Imam Husain (AS) camped at Karbala, where a huge army surrounded them, symbolising sheer desolation and inevitable ruin. Ever since, the battle of Karbala the martyrs are remembered every

year by muslims all over the world and their martyrdom mourned by the muslims and non muslims all over the world. The commemorative gatherings/majalis are held in every shia household across the world, discourses delivered, and elegies resonate from houses mourning the martyrdom of the beloved Imam Husain(AS), the Prince of Paradise. The men, women and children don black dresses, preparations are made for the days of mourning and the much anticipated month begins with the sighting of the moon.

"Ibtida e- aza hai vavaila, Mah -e-gham runuma hai vavaila."

Sarojini Naidu, the great indian poet and freedom rethgfi had a multi-ethnic outlook and she was broad-minded in her poetic stance and approach towards different religions of India. She was a true patriot and worked for the Hindu-Muslim Unity. In her poem 'The Imam Bara', she very beautifully has expressed the pathos of the poignant pageants of Muharram and the Imambadas, the house of the Imam.

*'Out of the sombre shadows,
Over the sunlit grass,
Slow in a sad procession
The shadowy pageants pass
Mournful, majestic, and solemn,
Stricken and pale and dumb,*

*Crowned in their peerless anguish
The sacred martyrs come.
Hark, from the brooding silence
Breaks the wild cry of pain
Wrung from the heart of the ages
Ali! Hassan! Hussain!*

*Come from this tomb of shadows,
Come from this tragic shrine
That throbs with the deathless sorrow
Of a long-dead martyr line.
Love! let the living sunlight
Kindle your splendid eyes*

*Ablaze with the steadfast triumph
Of the spirit that never dies.
So may the hope of new ages
Comfort the mystic pain
That cries from the ancient silence
Ali! Hassan! Hussain!'*



**Tazia and Zareeh on the Shah Nasheen
of the Imambada Sibtainabad**

In the province of Oudh, which now comprise of the Districts falling in the Lucknow and Faizabad Commissionarate, for two months and eight days, celebrations of any kind are not observed in most of the muslim households. Weddings and birthdays are also not celebrated during the period of mourning. In Lucknow, a city which abounds in cultural harmony, Muharram is an all-religions affair. The Muharram rituals which include the maatam, taziadari, nauhakhwani, seenazani, qamazani and zanjeer ka maatam are followed by all the communities, seeking divine blessings. Members of all communities participate in the Azadari processions and organize sabeels, distributing sherbet and other goodies to the ones in the processions of mourning and maatam. Muharram has in the history of Lucknow been a confluence of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Imambada Sibtainabad pioneered the first ever Shia-Sunni Joint Namaz, in Lucknow on Baqreed in the year 2015 an event which earned worldwide acclaim. However, primarily the shrine engages in the holding of Majlis during the month of Muharram in commomeration of the martyrdom of the family of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The story of Imambada Sibtainabad is like a fairy tale though a true one, when a monument caught in neglect and apathy, subject to gross indifference is not only rescued but also made to acquire its lost glory, charm and grandeur. It undoubtedly is a turn around story and needs to be replicated in other parts of our country. It is for us to stand to the cause of history ,culture and heritage so that the country's past is immortalized for our posterity to cherish.

While much has been done, in terms of the removal of encroachments from within and around the Imambada campus, the menace of illegal parking of vehicles continues unabated. Maqbara Road leading to the Imambada is forever choked as a result of many encroachments having come up on the pavements and the roads. This problem needs to be addressed by the powers that be, so that the tourists, pilgrims and devotees have an unobstructed access to this magnificent edifice of yore and be a witness to the grandeur of this monument.



The same methodical, concerted and dedicated approach, if adopted for the other “lost monuments” across the country would ensure not only their rehabilitation and repair, but also contribute towards performance of our fundamental duties, and ensure that we dedicate these monuments for our coming generations, which is not only our bounden duty, but also the call of the hour.

मुझे यह जानकर बड़ी खुशी हो रही है कि इमामबाड़ा सिबतैनबाद के सिलसिले में इन्तेजामिया कमेटी की जानिब से जनाब मोहम्मद हैदर साहब की निगरानी में एक सोविनियर (यादगारी मुजल्ला) शायी किया जा रहा है। हकीकत ये है कि अल्लाह और मोहम्मद ओ आले मोहम्मद की मदद और कौम की कोशिश से आज इमामबाड़ा जिस हालत में नजर आ रहा है वो पहले नहीं थी। इमामबाड़े के अतराफ इसकी सहन्धियों यहां तक कि शाहनशीन तक पर नाजायज कब्जे थे।



इमामबाड़े को नाजायज कब्जों से आजाद करवाने के लिए कौम के दानिशवार अफराद और अंजुमनों की जानिब से काफी कोशिशें हुईं। काफी जद्दोजहद का सामना करना पड़ा। तंजीम ए पासदारान ए हुसैन के नौजवान भी इस तहरीक में पेश पेश रहे। बाजयाबी से कब्ल इमामबाड़े चबूतरें और इमामबाड़े के अन्दर भी एक मजलिस को मैने खिताब किया जिसमें कौम ने बढ़ चढ़ कर शिरकत की। बुजुर्ग उलेमा की जानिब से भी कोशिश हुई मगर कामयाबी नहीं मिली। इसी तसलसुल में हमने 2005 में पहली मोहरम को जुमे के बाद बड़े इमामबाड़े से इमामबाड़ा सिबतैनबाद तक एहतिजाजी मार्च निकाला और ऐलान किया कि अगर 6 मोहरम तक इमामबाड़े से नाजायज कब्जे नहीं हटे तो फिर इस से ज्यादा बड़ा प्रोटेस्ट मार्च होगा।

हमारे मुसलसल एहतिजाज और आवाम के जबरदस्त इत्तेहाद से हुकूमत दबाव में आई। उस वक्त के माइनोंरिटी वेलफेयर के वजीर जनाब शाकिर अली की मदद शामिले हाल रही। उन्होंने हमारे साथ इमामबाड़े में नाजायज कब्जों को अपनी आँखों से देखा और पुलिस और ऐडमिनिस्ट्रेशन को उन्होंने इमामबाड़े को नाजायज कब्जे ख़ाली करने की हिदायत दी जिसके बाद हमें इमामबाड़े की बाजयाबी में कामयाबी मिली, और आज सूरते हाल सबके सामने है कि किस शान से अजाए इमाम हुसैन अलेहिस्सलाम का ऐहतेमाम किया जा रहा है और इमामबाड़ा माशा अल्लाह नए लखनऊ में अजादारी का एक बड़ा मरकज़ बन गया है। इमामबाड़े की बाजयाबी के सिलसिले में महकमा ए आसारे कदीमा की कोशिशें भी गर्रां क़द्र है और उन्हें कतई नजरअन्दाज नहीं किया जा सकता। इसके अलावा अजाए इमामबाड़े की देखरेख और उसे इसकी पुरानी शकल देने में महकमे ने जो किरदार अदा किया है उसे भी फरमोश नहीं किया जा सकता।

आखिर में एक बार फिर इमामबाड़े की इंतजामिया और मोहम्मद हैदर को सोविनियर की इशाअत के लिए मुबारकबाद देता हूँ। अल्लाह जज़ा ऐ खैर दे। आमीन। शुक्रिया।

Syed Kalbe Jawad Naqvi
Imam-e-Juma

Aag ka Matam on the eve of 'Ashura'



This success story, wherein the efforts of some committed Lucknowites and heritage lovers spearheaded a movement which rescued a dying monument needs to be replicated and passed on to the younger generation. Our city is dotted with such masterpieces of architecture belonging to the bygone era which, if provided a decent upkeep and protection can catapult Lucknow on the world heritage map, and make it a popular tourist destination. The role of monuments in promoting tourism cannot be understated and history is replete with examples of countries and cultures thriving on the income acquired by way of tourism. If we glance across the globe we discover many such nations where heritage and cultural tourism has been

a very important source of income. The mandate is to protect, preserve and showcase our rich heritage because it constitutes the cornerstone of nation hood. A few of the buildings which can help Lucknow regain its lost glory by way of repair and renovation are the Chattar Manzil, the Farhat Baksh, Kothi Darshan Bilas and Gulistan-e-Eram, besides the less spoken about monuments like the Musabagh, the Bibiapur Kothi and the Wilayati Bagh, before they disappear into oblivion like many of their predecessors and contemporaries erasing many pages in history.

It is with immense pleasure I take this opportunity to congratulate team Sibtainabad headed by Mr Mohammad Haider, the enterprising lawyer, who has worked selflessly towards the restoration of this Imambada, the house of the Imam.

I have had the privilege of being an integral part of the Movement for the emancipation of this monument which stands tall with a new lease of life, inspiring the restoration and preservation of other Monuments which are waiting for a fair chance on the path of recovery. The story of the revival of a decaying Monument has a story to tell which is now being brought out in print. The 'Souvenir' which has now seen the light of the day, indeed is a laudable effort and definitely will help towards creating awareness about the importance of conservation of heritage.



(S. Saif Abbas Naqvi)
President, Shia Moon Committee,
President -Najmul Ulema Academy)



इमामबाड़ों और मस्जिदों का ताहफफुज़ करना हर शिया का मज़हबी फरीज़ा है ।

मुझे इस बात की खुशी है कि इमामबाड़ा सिब्तौनाबाद जो कि अवध के चौथे बादशाह नवाब अमजद अली शाह बहादुर (मरहूम) ने बनवाना शुरु किया जो कि उनकी वफात के बाद उनके बेटे नवाब वाजिद अली शाह (मरहूम) ने पूरा किया और एक अज़ीमुश्शान इमामबाड़ा बनके तैयार हुआ था, जो कि लखनऊ के हालात के सबब करीब करीब मिट चुका था ।

मुझे खुशी है कि मोमेनीन-ए-लखनऊ और इमामबाड़ा सिब्तौनाबाद की कमेटी ने दिन रात मेहनत करके और खुसूसन सैयद मोहम्मद हैदर रिज़वी साहब की काविशों ने इस इमामबाड़े को शहर के एक अज़ीमुश्शान इमामबाड़े में तबदील कर दिया, जो आज शिया कौम के पास मौजूद है और माशाअल्लाह इमामबाड़े में मजालिसें कसरत से बरपा हो रही हैं । मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ कि मेरी कौम के नौजवान ऐसे सैकड़ों इमामबाड़े और मस्जिदें जो खण्डरों में तबदील हो रहे हैं उनकी बका के लिए आगे आयेंगे और इमामबाड़ा सिब्तौनाबाद कमेटी की तर्ज़ पर सारे इमामबाड़ों और मस्जिदों को उनकी अस्ल शक्ल में दोबारा नवतामीर कराके उनकी बका करेंगे ।

Moulana Yasoob Abbas
Spokesperson : All India Shia Personal Law Board



Allow me to seek your kind attention to the Imambara Sibtainabad located in a very posh and central locality of our city Lucknow. Earlier its condition was very pathetic due to heavy encroachment and illegal settlement. But now, by the grace of God and sincere endeavours of youngsters under the patronship of some Ullamas of our community, the situation has completely changed. Imambara Sibtainabad has now been completely renovated and illegal occupants have been removed. A young, qualified and energetic youth of our community Mr. Mohammad Haider, a legal expert belongs to a very elite and educated Shia family. He has dedicated his life to save the historical monuments of Lucknow, especially his contribution for the protection and renovation of Imambara Sibtainabad cannot be forgotten. We need such type of educated, sincere and dedicated youngsters to continue such type of constructive work. According to the guide lines of our Marajae Kiram, our religious buildings should also be used for educational purposes such as tutorial and coaching classes as it was done at Masjide Nabawi (s.a.w.) during the time of Masoomen (A.S.). My good wishes for Imambara Sibtainabad Mubarak protection committee. May Allah shower his Taufeeqat on the members of the committee.

Dr Syed Kalbe Sadiq
Prominent Shia Cleric and Educationist

इमामबाड़ा सिबतैनबाद लखनऊ की तामीर को एक सौ इकहत्तर साल पूरे हो गये। 1857 के ग़दर में अंग्रेजों ने लखनऊ की तारीखी इमारतों की तरह इस इमामबाड़े को भी शदीद नुकसान पहुंचाया था।

बहुत से अफराद की कोशिशों के बाद अज़ा ख़ाने की रौनक फिर से वापस आना शुरू हुई। इस सिलसिले में सबसे ज़्यादा खिदमत इज़्जत मअब सय्यद मोहम्मद हैदर रिजवी साहब की हैं को एक अजीम खानदान के नये चरागों में से एक हैं जो पूरे हिंदुस्तान में नजाबत, दयानत, शराफत, काबलियत और बे लौस खिदमत—ए—खल्क की वजह से मुमताज़ और मशहूर हैं।

दीगर अवकाफ के जिम्मेदारों से उम्मीद करता हूँ की वह जनाब मोहम्मद हैदर साहब एडवोकेट से क़ानूनी रहनुमाई हासिल कर के मौसूफ की तरह अपने अपने इलाकों के अवकाफ के लिये वैसी ही खिदमतें करें, जैसी रिजवी साहब ने की हैं। खुदा वन्दे आलम बा हक़ चाहरदा मासूमीन वा शोहदएय कर्बला जनाब मोहम्मद हैदर रिजवी ऐडवोकेट को नज़र—ए—बद से महफूज़ रखें।

दुआगो

रुहुल मिल्लत मौलाना सय्यद अली नासिर सईद अबाक़ाती (आगा रुही)



Sibtainabad: Wajid Ali Shah in his first farman after ascending the throne passed orders for the construction of his father Amjad Ali Shah's mausoleum at the cost of about Rs. ten hundred thousand. It is however significant that though he ruled for another four years after Residents report of 1852, he neither asked for a loan from any Banker or British Government to pay of any arrears or debt. On the other hand he invested Rs. 20,50,000 in the government promissory note to stand in the name of different persons, together with seven lakhs of Rupees invested with the British Government in the form of perpetual loan for the maintenance of Sibtainabad. But any kind of preservation of this Mausoleum was denied by the British government, instead declared it a nuzool property in the first settlement only. It was only in 2005 when after concerted efforts by the members of the community and the public, the Mausoleum got freed from the clutches of the illegal business, that had been carried out there in the main hall of the Imambara since decades. There are still 66 tenants in the premises; they are to be evacuated systematically. There are certain Monuments encroached by the unscrupulous persons and groups. Efforts are to be made to free them taking the queue of the efforts from Imamabara Sibtainabad, for there better upkeep and proper use.



Roshan Taqui
Engineer, Historian and Author

Park vehicles elsewhere ...road to Sibtainabad Imambara clogged due to wrongly-parked vehicles



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Since Hazratganj has been declared as 'No Parking Zone', people have started parking their vehicles on the road leading to Sibtainabad Imambara (Balmiki nagar). As tourists find it difficult to move towards the monument, the Sibtainabad management has appealed the LMC officials to check the malpractice.

Commuters, who frequently visited Hazratganj, have found a way out. Some of them have started parking their vehicles on the road parallel to MG road which is still a safe place. This road is located behind Marksman. Moreover, presence of tea shops have worsened the situation.

Earlier, a tea shop in this narrow lane was present. It has almost encroached the entire pavement and his customers keep occupying the entire space opposite his shop by parking their vehicles. This causes extreme inconvenience and annoyance to the commuters, pilgrims and tourist visiting the Imambara. Adding to woes, a restaurant has also been running near the tea shop which has added to traffic chaos in the lane.

Mausoleum of the King Amjad Ali Khan who is also the founder of the Ganj. Adding to it has been included in the 'Heritage Walk' and when the tourist would come to see this historic Imambara, what impact they would get on seeing the condition of the lane. "I had shot off a letter to the Municipal Commissioner and requested for removal of vendor from the lane and also cancellation of the licence of the food joint."

Haider informed that as the condition of the lane is not in good shape and taking vehicle on it could damage the vehicle. "I had also asked commissioner to strengthen the road and also requested to declare it as 'No Parking,'" he added.

'Dastaan' of Karbala binds all with grief

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: The Lakhnau where Hindus joined Muslims in Muharram rituals. The Avadh where a Hindu paan-wala would avoid using catechu on Ashura day lest on the mourning day mouths get coloured red. The Lucknow where more than 50 Hindu marsiya-nigars (poets who write elegies on Imam Husain and the tragedy of Karbala) were born were all brought back on Sunday evening at the Imambara Sibtainabad in the presence of people of all faiths.

As Lucknow's first modern dastaango (story-teller) Himanshu Bajpai started reciting the sacrifice of Imam Husain's son, Janab-e-Ali-Akbar's martyrdom from excerpts of Ismat Chughtai's



Dastango Himanshu Bajpai

novel 'Ek Qatra Khoon' interspersed with verses of Meer Anis's marsiya as 'Bayan-e-Shahadat-e-Ali Akbar', even the Hindu patrons were aggrieved by the tragedy of Karbala. "I had never understood why people cried over an incident that took place centuries ago but now, I can feel the emotions," said Saumya Kumar, clinical psychologist, for whom it was the first time to be a part of a congregation on Karbala.

myspace
SM AYAAN RIZVI

Please do something!

I am a student of class 6 in La Martiniere College and a regular visitor to the mausoleum of King Amjad Ali Shah in Hazratganj, Lucknow. The monument, which is otherwise clean, off late has been developing into a garbage dump. The litter is piling up with the danger of disease and infections to the residents of the area. Besides there is also an open manhole near the gate, which is very dangerous. Children or even older people can fall inside it and hurt themselves. I request the authorities concerned to please make some arrangements to get the place cleaned regularly and cover the manhole to avoid accidents and also to provide cleanliness to this monument, which is historically and religiously important.



Open manhole near the mausoleum of King Amjad Ali Shah in Hazratganj.

A Facebook effort to rescue Sibtainabad Imambara

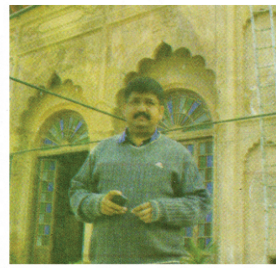
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

When most people in the state capital chose to look away from the Sibtainabad Imambara in Hazratganj during the heritage walk on Thursday, little did they realise that social networking site Facebook is playing an instrumental role in its restoration.

Senior officials complemented Mohammad Haider, the present caretaker of the monument for his crusade to restore its pristine glory. However, Haider admitted that the credit goes to Facebook, which connected him to right people.

Taking initiative, Haider created a Facebook page for Sibtainabad Imambara, a first of its kind restoration initiative for any historical monument in Lucknow. Soon, the number of fans increased and all were for restoration of the Imambara. Apart from instilling confidence and support in me, people even came up with suggestions. Some were kind enough to share rare old photographs showing the monument in its original shape. Others chipped in with legal documents establishing the title of the 'Imambara', claimed Haider.

After acquiring all the documents, Haider began his battle and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) woke up. Lucknow



Mohd Haider, present caretaker of monument, carrying out his crusade to restore the pristine glory of Sibtainabad Imambara

work. "After presenting my application in various government departments, I persisted with RTI queries and the departments contributed in restoration of the building," he added.

After several efforts, LDA conducted survey and even removed four motor garages which were running in the lanes of the monument. The next task on cards is the outer of tenants from the premises of the monument. There are presently 57 houses and six

and divisional commissioners Prashant Trivedi has sent a letter to the Vice Chairman of LDA and directed to initiate the eviction process.

The construction of Sibtainabad Imambara started in 1847 by the then Nawab of Awadh Amjad Ali Shah. His mausoleum is also situated inside the complex. Later, it was completed by Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. The Imambara was briefly used as a church during British rule. Declared as a heritage monument in 1919, the

Clean heritage: The second phase of cleanliness drive of heritage buildings in the city started by a group of people took place at Sibtainabad Imambara, the Mausoleum of King Amjad Ali Shah, Hazratganj, on Saturday.



A volunteer sweeps the premises of Imambara Sibtainabad during

Son et lumiere at Sibtainabad Imambara to mark Chehelum

HT Correspondent

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LUCKNOW: For the first time, the Sibtainabad Imambara in the city will use a son et lumiere (sound and light show) to commemorate the Karbala martyrs on the eve of Chehelum or Arbaeen, falling on December 2. Chehelum is observed on the 40th day after Muharram, the day of martyrdom and is falling on December 3 this year.

The grand show on Shab-e-Arbaeen (eve of Chehelum) will encapsulate mourning in the holy city of Karbala as well as the city of Nawabs that is said to have a most unique tradition of *azadari* (mourning) after Iraq.

It is perhaps the only city to have replicas of the mausoleum of Imams including those of the second, fourth, fifth and sixth Imams



■ Sibtainabad Imambara

royal family of Awadh.

S Mohammed Haider, mutwalli of Sibtainabad Imambara, said the show was being organised in collaboration with 'Shoulder to Shoulder', a non-government organisation of Muslim youths and professionals, and the waqf management committee of Imamabad Sibtainabad.

"In the show, a film will be screened on the huge screen that has been prepared by digitising the

narrated by Sanney Naqvi and Masood Abdullah in their own style. Will be another highlight of the show.

The Imambara is also holding an inter-faith dialogue, inviting speakers and debaters across the community lines. On the occasion, Maulana S Kalbe Sadiq, educationist and cleric, Rajender Singh Bagga, president, Lucknow Gurudwara Prabandhan Committee (LGPC), Carlyle McFarland, principal La Martiniere College, Himanshu Bajpai, theatre artist and scholar, Rana Satri, historian and author, Dr Ali Khan Mehruddin, PhD, MPH, University of Cambridge and MZ Khan of the department of civil engineering, Institute of Engineering and Technology Lucknow would be the key speakers. There will be a brainstorming on the real message of Islam

...हुसैनियों की मदद की थी राम वालों ने

लखनऊ (ब्यूरो)। जलाने वालों दिये धो के कुछ तुम्हें है खबर, किसी का घर भी जलाया था शम वालों ने, यता रहा है हमें खूं हुसैनी पंडित का, हुसैनियों की मदद की थी राम वालों ने। शायरे अहलेबैत अमद नसीराबादी ने इस कलाम के साथ हिंदुओं की इमाम हुसैन के प्रति अकौदत बयाना की।

हजरतगंज स्थित इमामबाड़ा सिद्दीनाबाद प्रबंधन कमेटी की ओर से चेहलूम की पूर्व संध्या पर दस्तानगो हिमांशु वाजपेई ने इमाम हुसैन के अदुहर वरस के कडियल जवान जनाबे अली अकबर की शहादत पर लिखा मीर अनोस के मर्सिए के बंद पेश किये। वाजपेई ने प्रख्यात कहानी लेखिका इस्मत चुतताई के नाविए एक कतरा खून, का जिक्र करते हुए जनाबे अली

○ **मजाक नहीं शान और सम्मान की बात है सेकुलरिज्म : हिमांशु**
○ **इमामबाड़ा सिद्दीनाबाद में हिमांशु वाजपेई ने पेश की जनाबे अली अकबर की शहादत**

अकबर के बारे में बताया। चेहलूम की पूर्व संध्या पर अपने खिताब में दस्तानगो हिमांशु वाजपेई ने कहा कि इस कार्यक्रम का मकसद लखनऊ की सांस्कृतिक विरासत से लोगों को रूबरू कराना है। उन्होंने विश्व नाथ प्रसाद माधुर की कता पढ़ते हुए कहा, आंखों में उनकी जगह, दिल में मकां



शब्दों का, यह जमीं शब्दों की यह आसमान शब्दों का, जिस रोज से आने को कहा था, उस रोज से हो गया यह हिन्दोस्तां शब्दों का। उन्होंने कहा कि माधुर ही नहीं न जाने कितने हिंदू शायरों ने इमाम हुसैन की याद में कलाम लिखे हैं। उन्होंने वर्तमान परिदृश्य पर कहा कि सेकुलरिज्म देश के संविधान की

प्रस्तावना में है। 2 साल पहले हमने जो निजाम चुना, उसमें राजा सेकुलरिज्म का मजाक उड़ाता है। ऐसे में देश को दोबारा समझने की जरूरत है कि सेकुलरिज्म है क्या। सेकुलरिज्म मजाक नहीं, शान और सम्मान की बात है। हमारा ताल्लुक उस शहर से है जहां सेकुलरिज्म की जड़ें सैकड़ों साल पुरानी हैं। हिंदू

शायरों की तरह की मुस्लिम शायरों ने होली पर गीत लिखे। कृष्ण बिहारी नूर का जिक्र करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि नूर से वर्ष 2002 में हुई मुलाक़ात में उन्होंने मुझसे वाकियाते कर्बला पढ़ने को कहा। उन्होंने कहा कि इससे दिल बड़ा होगा और शायर का दिल बड़ा होना चाहिए।

उन्होंने इस्मत चुतताई की किताब में जनाबे अली अकबर की अपनी बहनों जनाबे सकीना और जनाबे सगुरा से मोहब्बत का खाका खींचा तो अकौदतमंद बेकरार हो उठे। इससे पहले शने मुस्तफाबादी ने अपने कलाम पेश किये। इस दौरान फिल्म अभिनेता जावेद जाफरी, हाईकोर्ट के जज शबीहुल हसन, रिटायर आईएएस अली अजहर रिजवी सहित बड़ी संख्या में लोग मौजूद थे।

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इमामबाड़ा सिब्तौनाबाद हमारी नज़र से...!

एस.एन.लाल

वरिष्ठ पत्रकार एवं लेखक

इमामबाड़ा सिब्तौनाबाद में 2 दिसम्बर 2015 शबे अरबईन के प्रोग्राम 'लाइट और साउण्ड' के सिलसिले में कई बार जाने का इत्तेफाक रहा, उससे पहले इमामबाड़े के अन्दर न गया था, इसको अपनी बदकिस्मती समझे या अपनी मसरुफियात। 'लाइट और साउण्ड' प्रोग्राम जोकि इमामबाड़ा सिब्तौनाबाद में 'अज़ादारी का सफर' नाम से हुआ, ये प्रोग्राम अपनी नौअयत का बिल्कुल अलग प्रोग्राम था। इस प्रोग्राम में गैर आज़ादार लोग बड़ी तआदाद में शामिल हुए थे और इस प्रोग्राम से इमाम का पैगाम और उनकी इमाम की शहादत की वजह 'इन्सानियत की बका' जानकर गये। जो बात इस प्रोग्राम की कामयाबी का सुबूत और इमामबाड़े में हुए तारीखी प्रोग्राम को साबित कारती है। यह सब हो सका इस इमामबाड़े के मुतावल्ली जनाब मोहम्मद हैदर रिज़वी एडवोकेट साहब की वजह से, इस प्रोग्राम में मेरा किरदार एक स्क्रिप्ट राइटर का था।

इस प्रोग्राम का हिस्सा बनने में जितना खुशनसीब अपने को समझा कि उसके बयान को अल्फाज़ नहीं हैं, क्योंकि आज इमाम का पैगाम पहुंचाने के लिए ऐसे ही प्रोग्रामों की ज़रूरत है। इस प्रोग्राम के दौरान मैंने इमामबाड़े के दरो और दिवारों को बहुत करीब से देखा, इतनी नायाब धरोहर अवध की जो बड़े इमामबाड़े, छोटे इमामबाड़े, रौजे शाहनजफ की क़तार का चौथा हिस्सा है। मैं अपनी बदबख़्ती की वजह से लखनऊ में रहते हुए देखने से महरूम था। इस इमामबाड़े के बारे में बहुत कुछ पढ़ा और सुना सन् 1857 की गदर में ज़ख्म के निशान भी इस इमारत पर कुछ-कुछ नज़र आते हैं। मिर्ज़ा जाफर हुसैन साहब ने 1981 में लिखी अपनी किताब 'क़दीम लखनऊ की आखरी बहार' में इस इमामबाड़े का ज़िक्र करते हुए लिखा कि "मैं इस इमामबाड़े की हालत देखकर खून के आँसू रोया, मैंने सोचा अच्छा हुआ अवध के आखरी ताजदार वाजिद अली शाह इस इमामबाड़े में दफन न हुए"। लेकिन मैं इस बात से खुश था कि मुझे इस इमामबाड़े पर इतने गहरे गदर में बरबादी के निशान नज़र नहीं आये कि मैं उसपर रंज कर सकू। क्योंकि अब इमामबाड़ा बहुत हद तक संवर और सज चुका था, इसमें नक्काशी को दुरुस्त किया जा चुका था, रंग-रोगन हो चुका था, गिरते हुए पप्पड़ और छतों की मरम्मत हो चुकी थी। इमामबाड़े की पहले





मस्जिद इमामबाड़ा सिब्तौनाबाद

की बोसीदा हालत पर मैं बहुत यकीन तबसिरा नहीं कर सकता क्योंकि तब मैंने देखा नहीं, लेकिन सन् 2005 में अवैध कब्जों से इमामबाड़ा खाली हो जाने के बाद जो तस्वीरे अख़बारात के ज़रिये देखने को मिली, उस वक़्त जो दोस्त इमामबाड़े की बोसीदा हालत देखकर आये या उस दौर के इतिहासकारों ने जो इमामबाड़े की हालत किताबों में दर्ज की थी, वही रंज करने के लिए काफी थी, लेकिन शुक्र है कि इमामबाड़ा के अब वह ज़ख्म भर चुके हैं।

मुतावल्ली साहब की देखरेख में इमामबाड़े में माशाअल्लाह मजलिस—मातम और नज़्र वगैर बहुत ही वसी पैमाने पर होती है, और बहुत बड़ी तआदात में लोग यहां इन अज़ादारी के प्रोग्रामों में शामिल होते हैं। खास बात यहां ग़ैर अज़ादार भी बराबर से शरीक होते हैं। इमामबाड़े के हुदूद में मस्जिद में भी पांचों वक़्त की नमाज़ होती है जिसमें नमाज़ियों की अच्छी तआदाद रहती है। इस मस्जिद पर मुसलमानों के सभी फिरको के लोग नमाज़ पढ़ने आते हैं। रमज़ान के दिनों में माशा अल्लाह इफ्तारी इतनी ज़्यादा आती है कि इफ्तारी सभी मज़हब के ग़रीब—गुरबा लोगों में बांटी जाती है।

इमामबाड़ा अवध के आखरी बादशाह अमजद अली शाह ने अपनी दौरे हुकूमत में यानि 1842 में बनवाना शुरू किया था, जिस जगह इमामबाड़ा बनना शुरू हुआ वह जगह मेन्डू खान की छावनी के नाम से जानी जाती थी। बादशाह अमजद अली शाह ने इस मोहल्ले का नाम रखा सिब्तौनाबाद यानि इमाम हसन अ.स. और इमाम हुसैन अ.स. से आबाद मोहल्ला इस मोहल्ले बहुत सी इमारते बनवायी और इसी मोहल्ले में इमामबाड़ा तामीर कराया। इसी दौरान 47 साल की उम्र में ही राशिद अली उर्फ नज़्मुद्दौला अबुल मुज़फ़्फ़र मुसलेउद्दीन यानि बादशाह अमजद अली शाह का इन्तेक़ाल हो गया। बादशाह के सहाबज़ादे नवाब वाजिद अली शाह ने बादशाह अमजद अली शाह को इसी इमामबाड़े दफ़न कराया तो ग़ैर अज़ादार लोग इसे मक़बरा अमजद अली शाह के नाम से पुकारते हैं जबकि इसी इमामबाड़े में अमजद अली शाह के पोते नवाब मिर्ज़ा जावेद अली और नवाब वाजिद अली शाह की बेगम नजमुन निसा भी इसी इमामबाड़े में दफ़न हैं। अज़ादारों में इमामबाड़ों और करबलाओं में दफन होना अच्छा और खुशनसीबी समझी जाती है, वैसे अज़ादारों के कब्रिस्तान भी करबला और इमामबाड़ों में ही है। गांवों में तो आज भी खानदानी इमामबाड़ों का चलन है जहां लोग दफन होना पसन्द करते हैं। बहरहाल ये बहस सिर्फ़ इस लिए थी कि ये इमामबाड़ा भी और इमामबाड़ों की तरह अज़ादारी करने के लिए ही बनवाया गया था। यह जगह सिब्तौनाबाद के नाम से मशहूर न हो सकी, यह हज़रतगंज और क़ैसरबाग की सीमा हो कर रह गया। लेकिन सिब्तौनाबाद लफ़्ज़ को इमामबाड़े के साथ जोड़ दिया गया, तो आज बस इमामबाड़े का हिस्सा ही सिब्तौनाबाद कहलाता है। ग़ैर जानिबकार और ग़ैर अज़ादार इस इमामबाड़े को 'अमजद अली शाह का मक़बरा' कहने लगे, जोकि सिर्फ़ ख्याली तौर पर इमामबाड़े का मक़सद बदल देता है जोकि ठीक नहीं है।

सन् 1848 तक इमामबाड़ा पूरी तरह बन चुका था, लेकिन सन् 1857 की गदर में अंग्रेजों ने और इमामबाड़ों की तरह इसको भी बहुत नुकसान पहुंचाया। इमामबाड़ों को नुकसान पहुंचाने की खास वजह ये भी थी कि अवध से अज़ादी का झंडा बलुन्द करने वाली बेगम हज़रत महल नवाब वाजिद अली शाह की बेगम थी और अवध के नवाबीन ने लखनऊ को इमामबाड़ों का शहर बना दिया था, सन् 1857 पहली आज़ादी की लड़ाई में अंग्रेज़ शिकस्त खा चुका था, तो अंग्रेजों ने अपनी हार का गुस्सा इमामबाड़ों और अज़ादारों पर सबसे ज़्यादा निकाला। इतिहासकारों का कहना जितने इमामबाड़े बचे हैं लखनऊ में इससे भी ज़्यादा और इमामबाड़े भी थे, जिन इमामबाड़ों का अंग्रेजों ने नाम और निशान तक मिटा दिया।

यही वजह रही 1857 से 1872 तक लखनऊ में अज़ादारी एक तरह से बन्द सी रही। जुलूस सड़कों पर निकलना बन्द हो गये थे और लोग शाही जुलूसों का तरीका भी भूलने लगे थे। सन् 1871 ई० में जनाब अहमद अली साहब ने अपनी किताब में लिखा कि अवध की आज़ादी खत्म हो गयी है कोई मजलिस—मातम करने वाला नहीं है। तब अज़ादारी घरों में सिमट कर रह गयी थी। अवध दरबार के मुफ्ती मोहम्मद अब्बास साहब जोकि ग़ालिब के दोस्तों में भी थे, इनको भी अंग्रेजों ने बहुत सताया और इनका नायाब क़ुतुबखाना जला दिया। मुफ्ती साहब रंजीदा होकर लखनऊ छोड़कर दुसरे शहरों में रहने लगे, सन् 1872 में जब लखनऊ वापस आये तो इन्होंने उस दौर में निकलने वाले अख़बार 'तिलिस्म' अवध की अज़ादारी और जुलूसों के बारे में लिखा, जब 1872 के बाद से लोग लखनऊ में सड़कों पर फिर से अज़ादारी करने लगे।

गदर के दौरान सिब्तैनबाद का इमामबाड़ा पूरी तरह फौजी छावनी बना हुआ था और इमामबाड़े के अहाते में अंग्रेज़ अफसरों ने अपनी रिहायिश गाह बना ली थी, इमामबाड़े को 1858 से 1860 तक अंग्रेजों ने गिरजाघर बनाकर रखा था। सन् 1919 ई० में इसे असारे कदीमा इमारत के तौर पर दर्ज किया गया। बहरहाल आज इमामबाड़े की खास इमारत से कब्जे हटा दिये गये हैं। और इमामबाड़ा धीरे-धीरे अपने शुरुवाती संवरे हुए दौर में लौट रहा है। वैसे अभी भी आहता में अवैध कब्जे हैं जिसको धीरे-धीरे मुतावल्ली खाली कराने की कोशिश में लगे हैं। जब यह कोशिशें कामयाब हो जायेंगी तब इन्शाल्लाह इमामबाड़ा देखने से ताल्लुक़ रखेगा और आप महसूस करेंगे कि हम सन् 1847 में बने इमामबाड़े के उसी दौर में खड़े होकर इमामबाड़े की ज़यारत कर रहे हैं।

Our monuments are not only our heritage but an important source of history about the period they were built in. I congratulate the Mutawalli of Sibtainabad Imambara for restoring it to its former grandeur as befits a Azakhana of the Nawabs.

Rana Safwi
Historian, Author and Blogger



The origin of life is the most amazing story in the world. and love for heritage is an important plot in understanding what human beings are about. Mohammad Haider's love for heritage and history is infectious. our past, and interest in history gives numerous clues as to where human beings May have come from and where we could be headed. the renovation of monuments like the Sibtainabad Imamaba a under his supervision is a valuable contribution towards better understanding of all of us as human beings and our relationship to each other as members of a community, of the city and this marvellous country, our collective home.

Mehru Jaffer
Author and Journalist



**IMAMBADA SIBTAINABAD COMMITTEE MEMBERS
WITH THE HELPING HANDS**



L to R : Mr. Babban (Gardner), Mr. Anwar, Mr. Chunnan, Mr. Syed Mohammad Haider Rizvi (Mutawalli), Mr. Fazil Husain (Naib Mutawalli), Mr. Kazim Husain (President) and Mr. Nawab.



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